THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SARASWATI MAHAL.
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SANTO SEBASTIANO:

OR, THE

YOUNG PROTECTOR.

Printed by T. DAVISON, Whitefriars, London.

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A Novel.

IN FIVE VOLUMES.

SECOND EDITION.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

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CHAPTER I.

FULL of the pleasing contemplations which the letter of Mary inspired, Julia determined upon walking out.—This morning again restored a fine clear frost, and she sallied forth alone. Intuitively her feet led her to the eventful lake; the ice again was whole, and no vestige remained of the horrors of the preceding day, except the bough of the willow, severed from its parent bole; which now lay along the bank, where the fishermen had thrown it out of their way. With gratitude Julia kissed the spot, which by its appearance she knew Lord

St. Orville had held. It had proved, a temporary security to him, and her grateful heart paid homage to it. Upon this bough she now seated herself; for curving upwards, it formed a commodious seat. The horrid adventures of that lake, and all the virtues of her young benefactor, who so narrowly she escaped the misery of seeing sink from her sight for ever, forming her meditations until her young benefactor himself struck her view, and who, in the wild impetuosity of his feelings, threw himself at her feet.

Lord St. Orville, finding that he was perfectly well this morning; (or, at least, anxiety to see his father, and the adored preserver of his parent's, and his own life, making him believe himself so); arose at his accustomed hour, but soon, from learning the time his mother retired to rest, knowing he should have little chance of seeing Julia for some hours, and not venturing to present himself uncalled before his father, (on whom he almost trembled for the effect of their first meeting) he bent his steps to the cilff, to speak his animated thanks to

Julia's agents in his preservation. He only found Dame Jones at home; whose joy at seeing him safe and well sensibly affected him; and as if, by inspiration, knowing what then would give most pleasure to the dear preserver of her children to talk upon, related to him every word, look, and motion of Miss De Clifford, when she came to summon aid for him, and how she had herself unchained and taken Neptune with her, to his rescue.

"What could have induced Julia, in defiance of that terror she had ever unaffectedly evinced at this formidable animal, even to enter his kennel alone, and herself give him freedom? Was it solely compassion; or could it, could it be love?" The question, though only a question, excited such emotion, that, too mighty for concealment, he made his retreat from Mrs. Jones's, and hastily descended to the scene where Julia had been actuated to such exertion for his and his father's preservation; he had walked round the lake, shuddering at the danger they had so providentially escaped, and his heart throbbing with gratitude to

heaven and Julia, until he saw our heroine approaching.

This unexpected sight of her, set every emotion of his heart in wildest tumult; and so full of love and tenderness he found it, that he dared not at that moment accost her, lest he should betray his bosom's secret: hastily he therefore retired into the Boscade; but still carefully taking his station where he could observe her. He saw her kiss the branch of the willow which he had held by.—"Was this the gratitude of humanity, or of love?" was a prompt question from his panting heart. "But who was to answer it?—Time, and Julia."—And now he beheld her pensively seat herself, and shortly after apply her handkerchief to her eyes. "Tears! Were they awakened by recollection of the distressing scene of the preceding day, or were they excited by the calumny which malice had dared to attack her spotless fame with?" However, caused by what they might, he could not bear that Julia should shed tears; and rushing towards her, his heart overflowing with every tenderness, he threw himself on his knees be-

fore her; and grasping her hand, which was unemployed by her handkerchief, he pressed it to his lips, his heart exclaiming,

"My Julia!—my life!" when suddenly recollecting himself, he audibly repeated a terminating s. and added, "preserver."

Julia now trembling with agitation at his unexpected appearance, and at the emotion he evinced, lost the power for a moment of articulation. She could only aim at raising him by the hand he held of hers, in his tremulous grasp; and with the other to motion to him to sit beside her.

Her wish was law to him, and instantly he obeyed it; but her hand he relinquished not; that he still retained; imprinting kisses on it; and while tears of tenderness and gratitude bedewed her glove, still repeating, "Preserver of my father's life, and mine!"

"Allude not to—speak not ever of yesterday to me, I beseech you," at length said Julia, "for I never can at all bear to hear of it."

"Never speak to you, of yesterday! Oh!

Miss De Clifford, do you suppose I can obey you?"

"Never, at least, until I learn to think of the very agonizingly terrible scene with composure—if I can, ever."

"Oh! when shall *I* think of it, with composure?" said Lord St. Orville. "Can the gliding form of Julia, like the succouring angel of pitying heaven, placing the means of preservation in my father's hands and mine, at the peril of his own life—ever—be——."

"Hush! hush!" exclaimed Julia, "or you will make for me blushes to think how languid my gratitude has been in finding the power so small to thank you; for twice my life preserved, at much terrible hazard of your own. Each time you sadly suffered for my good, and I got not harm at all;—for see, how well I am."

The tone in which she said this, was so resistlessly sweet, the accompanying look so fascinating, that they at once subdued Lord St. Orville's present small share of self-possession, and from excess of trembling agi-

tation, he with difficulty articulated some unconnected wishes for her ever continuing well and happy; and attempted to speak of her gratitude for the very trifling service he had been so fortunate to render her, as far transcending what he had performed.

And now poor Lord St. Orville perceived, that in aiming to lessen his own claim to Julia's gratitude, and to appreciate her potent share of it, he had awkwardly made out that her life was of little value.—He was distressed, provoked, indignant with himself, and felt terribly embarrassed; convinced he never appeared to less advantage; and at that moment totally unable to rectify his error.

Julia, who perceived nothing to his disadvantage in any shape, but believing all he said and did, the perfection of human excellence and refinement, concluded at once his embarrassment was indisposition, and in high alarm, she announced her fear, "that he was very ill."

Lord St. Orville, not thinking it yet time to confess his malady to her, faltered out,

"That her kind fears were groundless, and that he was perfectly well."

His faltering was conviction to Julia of her fears being just, and she anxiously exclaimed, "Ah! now I do very well know you are a great deal ill. I have not, for time long, seen you thus agitated and abstracted; and now I shall bear, worse than ever, to see you at all ill and unhappy."

That "now" thrilled in transports to the heart of Lord St. Orville, and he found it impossible to forbear the enquiry of, "Why *now?* my sweet friend!"

"Oh! because," she promptly answered, "that *now*"—and as promptly she made a full pause, when she had articulated "Now." She had, in the candour of her nature, been about to disclose her knowledge of his being her long reverenced secret friend and benefactor; but the sudden recollection of the objections she had, to appear aware of this, arrested her further utterance; and now, in her turn, trembling, blushing, and embarrassed, in consciousness that she had a secret to conceal from Lord St. Orville, she gave

to him the fond, the joyful hope, that love had entered her heart, or was fluttering to enter it for him. But reasonably founded as was this rapturous hope, it inspired no look of conscious triumph, or confidence of air. He truly loved; and therefore loved with the pure refinements of the passion. The feelings of Julia were held by him too sacred to suffer them to undergo a moment's pain, could he prevent it; and the more she appeared embarrassed, the more tremblingly anxious he became to calm her agitation, and tranquillize her alarmed delicacy; and most kindly and sweetly he said,

"You would feel my illness and affliction more sensibly, Miss De Clifford, because *now*, knowing me better, you feel more interested for me; and your goodness has led you, Now, to honour me with your friendship."

"Always you are so kind," said Julia, blushing, and in a tremulous tone of timidity, "to make for your friends those meanings that will show most for their advantage." Lord St. Orville bowed with profound re-

spect, arising from the almost idolatrous veneration he held her in; and a thoughtful pause ensued, which our heroine suddenly broke.

"How have I been led, from my much alarm for your being ill?" she exclaimed. "But after your so great deal terrible bath of yesterday, you have cold caught, for sitting here by the side of the lake, in total inaction, in this stiff-making frosty air."

"Oh! heaven and earth!" he cried, starting up, and snatching her, in anxious terror, from her seat, "you—you have been exposed to all this peril; you! who are so delicate. Oh, Julia! forgive my barbarous inattention. But, alas! alas! should you have suffered!"

"Indeed, dear friend," said Julia, "I am only much cold and stiff; the quick walk will make me right again. Will you take walk with me? It will be for your good too."

"Will I walk with you!" repeated Lord St. Orville, in a tone that electrified Julia.—It was given in one of Fitzroy's most passionate love-cadences; and what could it mean?

They now proceeded on their walk together; and as they turned from the lake, the formidable sound of Neptune's barking, struck on Julia's ear. She started instinctively, became very pale, and shuddered. No emotion of hers escaped Lord St. Orville.

"Miss De Clifford," he said, in a voice of melting tenderness, "to-day I see your terror of this animal unsubdued; and yesterday, you intrepidly sought him; and yourself brought him to our aid.—Oh, Julia!" He suddenly ceased, for he would not ask the question, his heart prompted, of, "What potent influence had then overcome her terrors?"

"It is very much true," replied Julia, "I am to day coward again of Neptune; but yesterday I thought of the great deal, dreadful cliff, when you braved every danger, even death, very horrible, to save me. I thought of *that*, and the pistol of Laroche; and Neptune no more was terrible to me."

"Alas!" said Lord St. Orville, mournfully,

"then it was gratitude only that prompted you to save me."

Julia was astonished. "Why did Lord St. Orville seem so painfully disappointed, that gratitude only had actuated her exertions? What other source could he possibly wish them to spring from?" The question startled and fluttered her heart. "But no, no, it could not be *that*. Did she not very well know the secret of his heart's attachment; and he who loved Lady Storamond, could never love another."

But now the powers of both, for conversation, were destroyed, and silently and thoughtfully they pursued their walk together, until they met Leslie come in quest of Lord St. Orville, whom Lord Delamore was now become extremely anxious to see.

They now hastened to the castle, and Lord St. Orville was soon clasped in the arms of his agitated father; and this interview of affection and gratitude proved (as Lord St. Orville expected) a most affecting one.

The moment Lady Delamore quitted her chamber, she proceeded to that of her now

confessedly adoring husband—she found him arisen, and no symptom of cold or illness hanging about him, and altogether so well, that he purposed dining with the family this day.

Ladies Hollowell and Selina (unwilling to yield even the small tattered shred of hope they still wilfully retained of their plots at length proving successful) at an early hour placed themselves in the anti-chamber of Lord Delamore's apartments: but his lordship made plausible excuses for not admitting them, until joined by his wife and son, when he requested the honour of seeing them.

Lady Selina attempted her long accustomed fawning caresses; but a frigid look from Lord Delamore repelled them. In this interview he was calm and collected; but full of lofty, awing grandeur of deportment. The associates in art were highly disconcerted, fully convinced that their projects were, for the present at least, demolished.—"The unfortunate events of Lord St. Orville, so resolutely hazarding his own life, to save his father's; and Lady Delamore

fainting, in a fit of jealousy, having placed them now, firmly in the heart of this (in their opinion) versatile man," and secretly rejoiced were they both when they received a summons from Lady Ennerdale to set out upon a morning excursion.

And now, Lady Delamore, leaving her son with his father, hastened to the apartments of our heroine, again to pour forth her thanks for the preservation of her husband and her child; and for all that happiness she had been the means of leading her to; charged too with a request from Lord Delamore, that Julia would visit him; but with this request our heroine, most unexpectedly, refused to comply.

"For, dear Lady Delamore," she added, "though your melting thanks, and those from Lord St. Orville, have been much overpowering for me, they came so great deal kind and tender; yet still the pain they made was pleasure too; but I should recoil from the speak of Lord Delamore's acknowledgments now;—given by justice, for my claim. The thanks of friendship to friendship must flow in sweetness.—Our thanks to the

bad miscreant, who has service done us, has not the incense from heart to heart in it; for though we own the obligation to him, we still have feel of his unworthiness. Our thanks are then much pain for us to give; ungracious to him for to receive; since he must the knowledge have, they come reluctantly without esteem.

"Now am I in the thought of Lord Delamore, the much bad miscreant, for duplicity, imprudence, indecorum, and many, great deal, evil things. I will not pain make for him; I will not pain to myself give by heartless ceremony. It is my ardent wish, that at dinner we meet, as if never at all yesterday had been;—but to make ease for the mind of Lord Delamore, (in much burden of unacknowledged obligation) tell for him, to lay out of principal and interest all, in a very, great, large stock of affection for me against good time shall come, to say for him, Julia De Clifford is not unworthy of his regard."

"But, my sweet, beloved Julia," replied Lady Delamore, much affected by her discriminating delicacy, "my lord waits not for

time future, to know you are worthy of his highest estimation, for time past, time present, have incontestibly proved *that* fact; and my lord feels the most firm conviction of your being vilely calumniated; for fully has he discovered the baseness of your accusers."

"Julia!" continued her ladyship, tears of piety glistening in her beautiful and expressive eyes, 'those whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth.'—Now firmly, and for ever (I trust) in the full confidence, as well as cherished in the tenderest affection of my husband, with two such inestimable children, as my Alfred, and poor Theodosia, with every hope, that the wishes which I have formed for the sure and perfect happiness of my son will be fortunately realized: and in full certainty, that time will conquer Theodosia's present affliction (since hers is not a disposition long to nourish grief), and that, at some distant period, I shall see her in full promise of every happiness, united to the inestimable De Leslie; this world would be too much of heaven for me, and I should cease to think of a better, was

"it not for the direful allay to my earthly felicity; the misery of having a perfidious child."—

Lady Delamore now bitterly wept, and Julia grieved, because prudence allowed her not to remove at once that rankling thorn from the bosom of her friend.

Lucy now entered, with a letter from Doctor Sydenham to Julia.—Lady Delamore requested our heroine to read her letter, that she might know what day she was to have the pleasure of receiving him at Delamore castle; but terrible was Julia's dismay and disappointment, to find Doctor Sydenham's letter a few hasty lines, intreating her to make his excuses to Lady Delamore, for his not having the honour of waiting upon her at present, as the Duke of Avondale, (the doctor's patron, and most respected friend) in consequence of Lady Montalvan's death, had sent express for him to go to him in Wiltshire.

"Do not weep, my love!" said Lady Delamore, "at this disappointment of Dr. Sydenham's coming. You can write to him

upon the subject of this detestable calumny; and a letter from him to my lord will answer every purpose."

Instantly, Julia's tears were arrested. "How much fool, I have been," said she, "not at all to think of writing. Certainly, my great deal, considerate, kind friend, a letter will answer all good purpose for me; and to write I will, immediately."—Now she paused; tears again filled her eyes, and mournfully she added, "No, dear Lady Delamore; I cannot, for long time, write. Dr. Sydenham is in much, great grief, for Lady Montalvan, and in painful sympathy for his friend. To hear of this bad calumny to fall on me, would be for him, distress. I did think, ten days to be so aspersed, would be long time of misery; but misery or not, for me, it shall be ten times ten before I will add grief to the grief, of Doctor Sydenham."

Lady Delamore was much affected; and smiling affectionately, in pleased emotion, pressed Julia to her breast. "Oh! Julia!" she exclaimed, "surely, when heaven thus

"formed you, the counter part of my Alfred, it destined you for his wife, to constitute his happiness!"

Julia felt her cheeks suffused with glowing blushes; she hid them on the bosom of Lady Delamore, but attempted no reply.

At this moment, a message arrived from Lord Delamore, expressive of his apprehensions, inspired by the long absence of Lady Delamore, "that either her ladyship or Miss De Clifford was ill."—Instantly his Emily hurried to him, to dissipate his fears, and to deliver to him the answer of our heroine.

CHAPTER II.

Not very long was Julia left to her solitary meditations; for Lady Delamore shortly returned, entered our heroine's *boudoir*, but stopped at the door; and with a sweet, resistless smile of supplication, said,

"I am, dear Julia! secure of a kind reception here, myself; but I now solicit, (and fain would insure) one for a very importunate man, who is determined to visit you:" but ere Julia had time to reply, she beheld Lord Delamore himself. Her astonishment seemed to suspend every faculty. Lord Delamore rushed forward, and clasped her, with almost convulsive emotion, in his arms.

"My child! my friend!" he exclaimed, "preserver of my son! my Alfred!—giver of every happiness to me, in leading me to the affections of my Emily; I cannot, will not, longer bear this torturing estrange-

ment from you!"—And now, Lord Delamore, overpowered by excess of feeling, was compelled to sink into the nearest seat; where, covering his face, he strove to hide how much he was affected.

Julia agitated by powerful sympathy, on thus beholding his touching emotion, gently disengaged herself from his grasp, and flew to the arms of the no less affected Lady Delamore.

In a few moments, his lordship resumed his firmness; and holding out his hand to Julia, he mournfully said, "Will you, will you not receive the ardent thanks of a doating father's heart, for rescuing his darling child from death? Oh! Julia, but for you my Emily had now been a miserable mourner; in affliction too mighty for the sensibility of her nature to sustain.—There, beholding the clay-cold body of her child—here, the stiffened tenement of earth, she once called husband. Think! think of the pangs you spared my Emily, and wonder not that gratitude unmans me. Will you not permit me to thank you for my own life, when you have

made it precious to me?—Will not my own Emily plead for me, and win the daughter of her heart, and mine, to pardon a sincere penitent, who keenly, deeply feels the bitterest pangs of remorse, for having ever listened to the malicious calumnies of her degenerate accusers?"

While his lordship continued speaking, Lady Delamore had been imperceptibly leading our heroine nearer, and still nearer to him; and now he caught her hand; and Julia, melted by his manner, and grieved to think he should suppose she could be angry with him a moment after he expressed his contrition; now, with the innocent action of an affectionate child, eager to be reconciled to a beloved parent, held up her mouth for the kiss of amity.

Lord Delamore, enraptured by the beautiful innocence and goodness of heart, expressed by her action, kissed her with paternal affection, and pressed her tenderly to his bosom; and Lady Delamore, in ardent joy, enfolded them both within her arms; kissed each of them with fervor, and energetically exclaimed,

"May it be ever thus!—the reciprocal affection of father and child know again no estrangement; but still, still increase in tenderness, as time goes on!"

"It shall be ever thus," said Lord Delamore, with emphasis; "your sweet aspiration, my own Emily, shall be realized; and to prove myself a tender parent to this beloved child, I will know no rest until I wipe away this vile malicious calumny from her immaculate innocence; when her diabolical traducers shall tremble at my just vengeance."

"Oh! Lord Delamore!" said Julia, much affected by his kindness, and his Emily's, "let not such thought, so great deal, terrible, as vengeance, disturb that much happiness, come at last, to make delightful dwelling here. Clear my fame, in pity, my dear friend; yet let the triumph of innocence be attended still by gentle mercy, sweet and lovely."

"As yourself!" exclaimed Lord Delamore. "But Julia, sweet precious child! I must be ust to innocence and you. In this business, you shall take no step to clear yourself.

I have insulted you by my hateful suspicions; and I will, in just atonement, take every step for your vindication.—I will myself write to Doctor Sydenham; and my worthy friend Temple shall go as my delegate into Wiltshire, to meet him, and be the bearer of my letter to the good doctor, and of his reply. —The age and function of Temple, in my opinion, make him a more appropriate ambassador, in this delicate business, than the youthful, ardent Alfred, who is too partial to prove an unprejudiced judge; and *you know*, my child, that innocence, in conscious pride of its own purity, will only seek for rigid justice; and besides, sweet Julia, (do not think me languid in friendship, and affection to you) I could ill bear even to do you service, to endure my boy's absence now. When I close my eyes, my vision is filled with the dreadful image of my drowning child; perishing amid the hopeless element, through affection for his once stern father. When absent from my sight, I believe him imperiled still, by direful danger; and—oh! Julia, pity the weakness of a parent's irritated nerves, but do not believe

'I am ungrateful.' And now his voice faltered so he could not proceed.

Julia pressed Lord Delamore's hand, in kindest sympathy, and Lady Delamore, grieved to see her lord so very much subdued, exerted all her powers to lure him into a conversation upon less affecting subjects; he quickly saw the tender interest which actuated her to this, and his delight, upon observing it, impelled him on to smile in joy; and to talk, and look, (though not composed) at least, like a most happy man.

And now, when all were led, insensibly, into cheerful conversation, a note was brought to Julia, from Lord Westbourn, "intreating a five minutes' audience of her."—Julia, wondering what he could want to say to her, handed his billet to Lady Delamore, who, after perusing it, requested permission to shew it to her lord.

Lord Delamore was at no loss to guess the nature of Lord Westbourn's business with Miss De Clifford, and advised her "immediately to grant the interview, and in the library, as the apartment most ex-

clusively belonging to him, the guardian of her person; and he hesitated not to tell the astonished girl, "that Lord Westbourn was about to offer her himself."

"What! that man, my Lord, so old, to be father for me!" exclaimed Julia, colouring with surprise—"But, dear Lord Delamore, must I, for certainty, see him about it?—Could not you have the goodness to tell for me, "I cannot at all be wife for him."

"My dear child, neither my Emily or myself can appear in your rejection of him; he knows our wishes upon the subject of your choice, and would naturally conclude we influenced you against him."

Julia, with glowing cheeks, and highly agitated by well guessing who the wishes of Lord and Lady Delamore pointed to, for her choice to fall upon, now sent a reluctant acquiescence to his lordship's request, appointing the time and place; and, true to her assignation, she met Lord Westbourn in the library, who offered himself for a husband to the blushing, recoiling Julia; who, with

much urbanity, decidedly rejected him; a rejection his lordship fully expected; therefore the mortification he sustained with fortitude.

"Expecting a rejection, why did he make the offer?" our readers will naturally exclaim. But Lord Westbourn never acted without a motive. An express had arrived to him, with the intelligence of the Countess of Montalvan's death, and of the Duke of Avondale's dangerous indisposition, in consequence of the loss of the last of his race. His daughter, therefore, was now Countess of Montalvan, and to inherit, after the duke's decease, all the wealth his grace held in right of his late duchess, as Countess of Montalvan; and it was necessary they should go and condole with the duke, and attend, in anxious affliction, during his illness, which Lord Westbourn hoped would be his last; but, careful to evince himself a disinterested suitor, he made his offer prior to his departure, and ere his project should be developed.

When Julia dressed for dinner, this day, she experienced an unusual anxiety about

her appearance, and bestowed more care and pains in making her toilet, than she had often felt a wish to do; still beguiling herself with a belief, that all this unusual solicitude arose from her supposition "that, as the castle had been besieged all the morning with hosts of inquirers and congratulators, relative to the escapes of the preceding day, innumerable guests would appear in the evening; and that she, forming one of the principal figures in the incidents of the lake, should attract general attention, and therefore female vanity was naturally upon the alert."—All this was mighty fine sophistry, inspired by her deluding imagination; but, poor deceived Julia! the same anxiety about looking brilliantly lovely had existed, were the gates of Delamore castle closed against all the world, except its present inhabitants.

Julia, now restored to the estimation of Lord Delamore, and caring, therefore, little for the calumny of Lady Hollowell; in good spirits, the consequence of that happiness of mind she caught, from participating in the now firmly established felicity of her

beloved Lord and Lady Delamore, as brilliant in beauty as her heart could wish, she descended, from some undefinable impulse, rather earlier than usual, to the drawing-room; where she experienced something like disappointment, at only finding Miss Ann Beaumont; when, expressing artlessly her wonder "at what was become of the rest of the family, but particularly of Lord St. Orville, who was always so soon ready for dinner," Miss Beaumont replied,

"The ramblers staid out late this morning, and Lord and Lady Delamore, with Lord St. Orville, are detained from making their appearance by the unexpected arrival, about an hour ago, of that scourge of society, Lady Frances Harcourt."

"Lady Frances Harcourt, a scourge for society! Dear, Miss Beaumont! I was taught to believe her being a very amiable woman."

"So her family pretend to say," replied Miss Beaumont. "They affirm she has an excellent heart; but can that heart be good without benevolence? and benevolence always inspires urbanity.—Lady Fran

ces is a sour misanthrope, who thinks the most uncandidly of every one; and, unrestrained by any law of good breeding, says to all exactly what she thinks. Although now many years a widow, she has not forgotten the miseries of her wedded life, when, deceived both by love and friendship, she was taught hatred for the human species. I am myself, however, infinitely prejudiced against her, and therefore I may judge with severity; but I will frankly tell you the great cause of my dislike, and, in the incident, you will see how ill-natured she can be.

"My dear mother, I am afraid you have observed, is rather too much prone to expressing herself in words not universally understood.—This little foible sensibly hurts my dear father; and yet, Miss De Clifford," (and tears of affection now started to Ann Beaumont's eyes) "indeed it is the only foible of my excellent mother. Unfortunately, during a visit of Lady Frances Harcourt's, my mother was here one evening, and there was a very large company assembled; when my mother, unluckily, began a long sto-

ry, in words which few of the party comprehended.—For some moments, Lady Frances listened with profound attention—then rang the bell—spoke to the answering servant, who speedily returned, according to her order, with the largest folio dictionary in my lord's library, which she desired him to place on a table, with a pair of candles; then, putting on her spectacles, she sat down, and almost every moment stopped my poor mother in her story, by exclaiming, as she turned over the pages—

"'Be it known to such ladies and gentlemen, who are as ignorant of their native language as myself, that the meaning of Mrs. Beaumont's last word is so—and so;' —and then she read aloud all the explanations, with the burlesque gravity and ludicrous whine of a town-crier.

"My mother was terribly disconcerted, and my father looked so distressed, and seemed so unhappy, for several days after, that I learned to be unchristian, and never to forgive the spiteful Lady Frances.

"You know, possibly," continued Miss Beaumont, "that Lady Frances is only Lord

Delamore's half sister, by the paternal side; but I have heard she absolutely idolized him, until he forsook his wife and children, and went abroad with Mrs. Monk: from that time she has treated Lord Delamore with such insolence and contempt, that I wonder how he, who can be so stern and haughty, submits to it."

CHAPTER III.

The *tête à-tête* of our heroine and Miss Beaumont was now interrupted by the entrance of Lord Delamore, affectionately leaning upon the arm of his son. Their lordships hastily advanced to Julia.

"How I rejoice to see, by your appearance, Miss De Clifford," said Lord St. Orville, delightedly gazing on her, "that you have sustained no injury from my barbarous inattention, in suffering you to sit so long by the lake this morning!'

"You know I did tell to you," replied Julia, blushing, "that quick to walk would make prevention from all mischief. We did walk, Lord St. Orville, and see how much well we both are."

"So! so!" said Lord Delamore, smiling in rapture upon them both, "sitting by lakes, and walking together! What think you, Miss Beaumont, will the good people at

Sedley say, when they hear St. Orville and our beloved preserver take *tête-à-tête* walks of a morning?"

"They will say, my lord," replied Miss Beaumont, "that their favourite, Lord St. Orville, could no where find so charming and appropriate a companion."

"Or one that his father more decidedly approves," said Lord Delamore, affectionately throwing his arm around Julia, and tenderly pressing her to his grateful bosom: he then drew her to a window, to hear from him of the arrival of his sister, and of her long series of unkindness to him, founded on the belief of his affection having strayed from his wife. "But," he added, "my amiable Emily, not enduring that she should think a moment longer harshly of me, has, in the short interval of her arrival, betrayed all my secrets to her, and told her 'how our pitying destiny, in the form of an angel friend, led us at length to discover our happiness, where we each panted to find it.'

"The recital given, in the touching sweetness of my Emily's language, melted Lady Frances to tears; but though virtues,

the most pure and exalted, are locked within her heart, yet is that heart a citadel of great strength; its every sentinel is cased in iron.—No outposts are kept ungarded: no spot of weakness can be found to steal through. Proof against every assault, it is indeed impregnable. But those the wary governor chooses to receive its gates expand for, and close them in for ever. Frances must prove my sincerity and repentance, before her heart readmits me.

"She is unlike you and my own Emily, who have ten thousand passes to your heart, unguarded and open to every assault of tenderness and compassion. You did but hear I had for years been wretched, and all my faults, viewed by pitying kindness, soon were forgotten in grief for my sufferings.—I did but say, 'Oh pardon!' and forgiveness came, in all the soothing sweetness of its native Heaven."

Miss Modely now came rushing in, and, like a roaring torrent, dinned every one with the rapid flow of her words.—This lady had alternate fits of loquaciousness and taciturnity, and one of the former was

now upon her. She was eloquent in her account of their morning excursion; although there had been no incident whatever to relate, except "a monstrous good spill they had had. Her sister had upset her curricle," she said, "when her companion in it, little beau Primrose, had been tilted out, and almost killed with the apprehension of being hurt."

The guests now began rapidly to assemble. Lady Hollowell, Lord Robert, Sir Charles, and Sir Lucius, came in nearly together. They were followed by Lord Westbourn, who no longer sought a place by Julia; but looked dejected, sighed often, and stole tender regretting glances at her, with all due and proper melancholy reserve, of a still adoring, though discarded lover. Shortly after his lordship, Ladies Delamore and Frances Harcourt made their appearance.

The height of Lady Frances had arisen above even what is usually termed the commanding; and, though she had numbered sixty years, her whole figure retained so much of elegance and symmetry, that it

told, at one view, how perfect it had been in youth. Like Lord Delamore, her air, her step, her every movement, wore the august dignity of majesty. Her large, dark, penetrating eyes, still retained a portion of their former brilliancy; and seemed, with their piercing rays, to enter the very souls of those on whom they turned their scrutiny. The rest of her face, though it had once been extremely handsome, yet wore no trace of ever being so transcendently beautiful as her brother's.

Lord and Lady Delamore now, with eager agitated affection, and tender interest, took each a hand of the blushing Julia, and led her to Lady Frances.

"Frances!" said Lord Delamore, with trembling emotion—"this is the preserver of my boy, who was sacrificing his precious life in filial affection."

"This, my friend," said Lady Delamore, tears of gratitude stealing down her cheeks, "this is the beloved being, who twice saved *my life*, by the preservation of my husband and my child."

"Frances," said Lord Delamore, "take

her into the inmost foldings of your heart; for she is worthy to hold a place there with Emily and Alfred."

Lady Frances took the hand of our sensibly affected heroine from Lord Delamore, pressed it with energy, and gently drew her into the seat beside her; yet she spoke not to Julia, but she earnestly regarded her with, evidently, the eyes of approving observation.

Miss Modely, who hated the wild cat, as she always termed Lady Frances, wishing to plague her by calling off her attention from the contemplation of Julia, and determined completely to disconcert her, resolved upon reminding her of an unpleasant incident, which had occurred, to worry Lady Frances, the last time they saw each other. Now, abruptly addressing her ladyship, said—

"Dear Lady Frances, do you remember the last day we met, when———"

"Indeed, Miss Modely," replied Lady Frances, "I shall ever remember it with gratitude and pleasure, as, on that day, we parted too."

Miss Modely, herself highly disconcerted, thought it better not to attempt any further allusion to the disagreeable incident. Miss Beaumont now engaging the attention of Lady Frances, her ladyship inquired kindly for her good father; but added, "is your mother still too young to speak plain?"

"The virtues of my mother's heart, madam," Miss Beaumont modestly, but firmly, replied, "are so plain to her children, that whatever her language is, affection promptly understands it, and hears it with reverence from an excellent and beloved parent."

"Infinitely to the credit of your heart and understanding, you have answered me, Miss Beaumont," said Lady Frances, "and henceforth *your* mother shall be respected by me."

Lady Selina Stratton entering, hastened now, with extended hand, and in affected surprise, towards Lady Frances; exclaiming, in a well-assumed tone of interest and pleasure—"My dear aunt Harcourt here! Had any one been kind enough to inform me of this, I should have flown on the wings of joy to pay my duty to you."

"*Your aunt* Harcourt!!!" replied Lady Frances, with the most sovereign contempt, and recoiling, with disgust, from the offered hand—"Lady Frances Harcourt is certainly here, but claims no duty from you."

Lady Selina, conscience-struck, grew pale, and trembled; and, shuddering with the presentiment that Lady Frances had made one direful discovery, could only reply, in faltering accents, "she was grieved to find she had, in some unknown way, offended her dear aunt;"—and then, completely humbled, she retired to a seat, and Lady Frances recommenced her observation of our heroine.

"I think," said Lady Frances, after a pause of some moments in general conversation, abruptly turning to her brother, "I think, every time I see that interesting and lovely young woman you call Miss Mildmay, her resemblance to you becomes more striking."

"That is, a most extraordinary, a most wonderful resemblance!" returned Lord Delamore.

"Extraordinary and wonderful! Do not talk nonsense, Theodosius, lest you provoke me to set my wits to work, and prove it no wonder at all;" said Lady Frances, relaxing from her habitual gravity into something, approaching to an arch smile.

"I wish you could," replied Lord Delamore seriously; "I should glory in such a child."

Lady Ennerdale, accompanied by her daughter, at this moment entered, attired in a very short frock dress, displaying her nicely flounced pantaloons. No covering to her neck, but a narrow lace tucker and a row of coral; and, with her Brutus' head unornamented, and her juvenile air, looking, at a distance, even younger than Lady Isabella.

"My dear Lady Frances!" she exclaimed, hastily running to her, "I rejoice to see you!"

Lady Frances arose, and courtesied with the ceremony of an utter stranger, "I thank you, young lady, for the great cordiality you greet me with," said she, "but I really am at a loss to know to whom my

gratitude is due. I conclude you are grown out of my remembrance. I dare say, now, I ought to inquire for your papa and mamma, and all your little brothers and sisters? If so, my pretty Miss, have pity on an old woman; help out my want of memory, and tell me your name."

"And really, do you not know me, dear Lady Frances?" exclaimed Lady Ennerdale, smiling sweetly, and so highly elated at being styled "Miss," that she could scarcely restrain a burst of exulting risibility.

"Know you, madam!" said Lady Frances, after deliberately putting on her spectacles, and staring through them in astonishment: "Know you, madam!—Indeed I did not, and that I could not, without the aid of my glasses, is not to be wondered at; since I could not expect to see you in a dress too juvenile for even your youngest child, that great tall girl there. But, perhaps, you are going to a masquerade this evening, and you go in the disguise of Youth.—Oh! I see now it is so.—Lady Hollowell has thrown off her weeds for the occasion, and goes as the *caricature*

of a fashionable lady.—Upon my word, two most admirable masks! Not a creature will discover either of you!—With a youthful mask on, Lady Ennerdale, every one will be deceived into a belief of your being young, and not once suspect you to be the mother of a grown-up family.—Nor will any one conceive this *outre elegant* the sad relict of the late Lord Hollowell, in the first year of her widowhood. Miss Modely too is going, and evidently as Lady Godiva:—and here comes Peeping Tom."

At this moment, Mr. Primrose had put his head into the room, with the most ludicrous expression in his countenance of hesitation, ruefulness, and inquiry. In a short time after his carefully and becomingly arranged head, curled *à le* Adonis, his exquisitely dressed little body appeared, breathing all the perfumes of Arabia; and, advancing to Lord Delamore, he said,

"Upon my word, my lord, I am really at a loss—I scarcely know if I ought to appear in company to-day; but, as the party is *en famille*, I suppose it will not be too indecorous."

Lord Delamore requested an explanation.

"Why, my lord," replied Mr. Primrose, "this has been a most eventful day to me. In it I find myself a candidate both for congratulations and condolence. The former, for the escape which I have had of being killed."

"'Fore George, it was a hair's-breadth 'scape!" exclaimed Lady Hollowell, who, now convinced of her having lost every chance of succeeding in her infamous design upon Lord Delamore, relapsed at once into her natural masculine manners. "In giving Stratton the go-by, I upset, and out popped little Hercules, like a shuttlecock, and lit upon his head in the snow."

"A very judicious arrangement, indeed," said Lady Frances; "as there could be no concussion from the softness of the clashing parts."

"But I might as well have broke my neck as not, madam," said Mr. Primrose, angrily.

"Indeed, I think so," replied Lady Frances.

Lord and Lady Delamore now politely congratulated the little beau upon his

escape; and then requested to know "what they were to have the distress of condoling with him upon."

"Why a letter," he replied, trying to look sorry, "awaited my return (for the post came in devilish late to-day) to announce to me the unfortunate death of my brother; drowned, by a sudden squall, upon a fishing party. Poor William! I am really vastly sorry for him. I am indeed!"

"Then, then," exclaimed Lady Hollowell, with quickness, "you are now Earl of Heathland, with an immense estate!"

"To all intents and purposes:" replied the little beau, strutting to a fire-place, and endeavouring to look dignified, as becoming a peer of the realm.

"Why this is indeed a windfall, blowing the sweet caresses of dame Fortune; and without any annoying appendages:" said Sir Charles Stratton, feelingly.

"It is an ill wind that blows no one good," said the new lord, chuckling, "and you may well call it 'a windfall,' for I expected it no more than my brother did; as poor William was to have been married in about a week."

"What a fortunate man!" exclaimed Sir Charles; but whether he meant the new lord, or the late one, who by drowning escaped a wife, we do not know.

"Very fortunate," replied his lordship, "since my brother was to die, that it was before I was thrown out of the succession. Really, I can scarcely believe that I am Earl of Heathland."

But, by two of the ladies present, he was soon convinced of that; for now he was a conquest worth speculating for; attention flowed sweetly in upon him—Miss Modely wooed him, in hopes he would make her a countess; and Lady Hollowell thought it a better project to become wife to this affluent silly peer, than secret favourite to Lord Delamore.

Dinner was waiting for the new Countess of Montalvan; and Miss Modely, on purpose to annoy Lord St. Orville (whom she hated, for not taking the numerous hints she had given him of her tender passion) said, "It is your niece elect, Lady Frances, who is thus cruelly starving us."

"The papers," said Lord Westbourn, with

infinite *nonchalance*, " were kind enough to make that match for my daughter, who has never yet even thought of love."

" Bless me!" exclaimed Miss Modely, " how violently you have coloured, Miss De Clifford!—Why, surely, you have not been the inserter of those paragraphs?—Heavens! I never saw any one blush so in all my life."

" And who, Miss Modely, can wonder that Miss De Clifford blushed;" said Lady Frances, " for she was observing your masquerade dress?"

Poor Julia felt ready to worship Lady Frances, for thus removing the awakened attention from her to the malicious Miss Modely. She was conscious she had blushed, and that consciousness but heightened her confusion. " Why could she be such a fool to blush at hearing Lord St. Orville's long talked of marriage alluded to?" was her mental question. She was not, could not, be *in love* with Lord St. Orville.—Indeed, was it a year or two after her late attachment, it might be so, and very probably; but now, it was an utter impossibi-

lity.—And thus, while Julia was reprobating her own folly in blushing without a cause, the sudden roseate suffusion of her transparent complexion had various effects upon many of the party.—It made Lord Westbourn turn pale; Sir Charles sigh. It was beheld with delight by Lord and Lady Delamore, whilst it filled the bounding heart of Lord St. Orville with the most rapturous flutterings of hope and joy.

At last the new Countess of Montalvan, elated by her increase of dignity almost beyond that concealment she wished to effect, made her appearance, after a most laborious toilet, secure of monopolizing general homage, and resolved to fascinate by the condescension of her even more than ever bewitchingly unassuming manners.

"I hope," she exclaimed, as she entered, in her usual tone of affected simplicity, "that I have not kept every body waiting. I shall be *so* sorry if I have; but no one will tell me; for nobody *ever* tells me if I do any thing displeasing to them."

"Then," said Lady Hollowell, "you

have never been in company with Lady Frances Harcourt."

"Dear me," replied Lady Montalvan, "is Lady Frances so sincere?—Oh! I am so glad!" then running up to Lady Delamore, and throwing her arms about her, with the most coaxing air, continued, "Do, dear, sweet, lovely, darling, *beautiful* Lady Delamore, introduce me to Lady Frances, that she may kindly tell me of my faults, and teach me to amend my errors."

"My stay at Delamore castle will be too short, Lady Montalvan, to admit of my commencing such an arduous undertaking", said Lady Frances, dryly.

"Lady Montalvan was disconcerted; but eager to convince Lady Frances how amiable she was, replied, "Nay, but I am very docile; the smallest hint will at once correct my greatest error; and it will be so benevolent in you to take pity on a very young creature, motherless, and surrounded by all the blandishments of sycophants, now when such monstrous wealth and honours, and more exalted titles, are flowing in to overwhelm my intellect. Mine is in-

deed a perilous situation. The dangers of prosperity are very terrible; and such an influx of wealth and consequence may prove too much for a weak young female to sustain."

"Oh! certainly, most certainly," replied Lady Frances, gravely, and in your perilous state I give you that advice you solicit. Marry without delay. Fate seems to point out, at once, your counterpart; the being formed in congeniality to be your *sapient* guide, your *able* counsellor, to *aid* you in your *weakness*, and *support* you in your expected *errors*. The strange coincidence, that on the same day should come to each the account of the favours of the *blind* disposer of riches, by the lucky death of two worthy relations, declares at once that destiny has formed, in her kindred moulds, the Countess of Montalvan and the Earl of Heathland for each other."

Lady Montalvan was highly disappointed that it was not Lord St. Orville, whom Lady Frances meant as her congenial soul; but when it was explained to her who Lord Heathland was, her mortification

and indignation proved almost too much for concealment.

Dinner was now announced; and when the party were assembled in the dining-room, Lord Delamore said, with much emotion—

"Frances, it is many a year since you sat beside me at table; I now *ask* you to confer that gratification upon me."

"It is nineteen years since I sought that happiness. Lord Delamore would not *ask* me to sit by an unworthy man; therefore, with heartfelt pleasure, I resume my seat by my beloved brother," replied Lady Frances, in a low tone, as she affectionately took his hand.

Lady Hollowell now forsook her post by Lord Delamore, to pay her devoirs to her new prey; and Lord Delamore, with all the qualifying conciliation of politeness, apologized to Lady Montalvan for giving her usual place at table to the preserver of his son's life, and his own; but to this change in arrangements her ladyship was soon reconciled, since Lord St. Orville seated between her and Julia; and con-

cluding she was acquainted with the entire dissolution of the conditional engagement subsisting for a time between their fathers, now treated her with a degree of voluntary politeness and attention she had never before experienced from him, which soon elated her to the highest pinnacle of exulting vanity, and almost taught her to forget her powerfully awakened hatred and jealousy of our heroine.

CHAPTER IV.

When the desert was laid on the table, and the attendants departed, Lady Frances declared, "she felt herself so happy in her old seat, by her brother, that she now exceedingly regretted having arranged for her departure the succeeding day but one."

Lord and Lady Delamore, and Lord St. Orville, expressed their sincere regret at her having done so; and offered every entreaty to persuade her to change her intention.

"It is impossible," she replied; "business of an arbitrary nature calls me almost immediately to town, and I must return to Black Tower before I go.—I am become a wonderful traveller, Emily. Since you heard from me, I have been in the North, to visit Lady Mary Saxby."

"Gracious Heavens! then, then you have seen my child!" exclaimed Lady Delamore, tears of joy, gratitude, and affection, springing to her eyes.

"And how, how is our dear girl?" asked Lord Delamore, with eager interest, and gratefully pressing the hand of his sister.

"Just as you could wish her," replied Lady Frances, "still in sincere affliction; but grieving with the fortitude of a Christian."

"You saw De Lisle too, Lady Frances," said Lady Ennerdale—"When does he talk of coming to me? I fully expected him at Stratton abbey."

"You know your son little, if you could expect him in the house of festivity, while the mourner cries to him for comfort: but you will soon see him, when I return to Black Tower to relieve him," replied Lady Frances.

It now appeared that Lady Frances, when she thought the first gust of Lady Theodosia's grief had subsided, not enduring that now she was in affliction she should seem (although it was by her own choice) an alien to her family, set out on that long journey, to persuade her to change the scene, and return with her to her home. Lady Theodosia, overcome by this act of

kindness and affection, in her apparently frigid and austere relation, who breathed not an accent like reproof for her late imprudence, could not refuse to comply with her request, and taking a grateful and affectionate leave of the amiable Lady Mary, and attended by Lord De Lisle, she proceeded with Lady Frances to Black Tower abbey, only stopping a few days in London, Lady Frances pleading fatigue; while in fact she staid there for the benefit of change of scene for her afflicted niece.

Upon hearing some of these occurrences which Lady Frances related, as little to her own credit as possible, Lady Selina exclaimed, affecting to look alarmed—

"What! Lady Theodosia and Lord De Lisle left alone together at Black Tower abbey!"

"Alarm not yourself, madam, about the decorum of my arrangements," returned Lady Frances, haughtily. "I left *my niece* under the care of a female friend; and *my female friends* are not chosen from the *profligate* of our sex."

"But, my dear Lady Frances, when may

I see Theodosia? Will my sister still object to see me?" said Lord St. Orville, with anxious affection.

"Still she shrinks from the idea of seeing you, as well as her father and mother," replied her ladyship—"The only being she at present expresses anxiety to behold is Miss De Clifford."

"Me! madam," Julia exclaimed, colouring with surprise, and the tears of sympathy and gratitude trembling in her eyes—"Lady Frances, dear Lady Delamore, may I not be permitted to go to Lady Theodosia?"

"Why, to tell you the honest truth," said Lady Frances, "I came hither to inveigle you away, to put you in the Black Tower, and then to proceed to London. Have you friendship or compassion enough to accompany me the day after to-morrow? The name of my seat is Black Tower abbey. I, the mistress of it, well accord with its gloomy name. Your friend is in deep affliction. Dare you encounter such horrors, and accompany me?"

"Oh! I would go any where to Lady

Theodosia," Julia replied, "if Lord and Lady Delamore will have the very much kindness to permit it for me."

"Permit you!" exclaimed both Lord and Lady Delamore—"Could any thing increase our obligations to you, it would be your thus kindly going to our afflicted child."

"But," said Lord St. Orville, his face suffused with the most animated tint of vermillion, and endeavouring not to evince the anxiety he felt, "I think it very wrong exactly and rigidly to indulge poor Theodosia in her whim of not seeing her nearest relations at present; since the longer this dreaded first interview is deferred, the more formidable, in her fancy, it will become, and still more painful when realized. To receive me, cannot, in possibility, affect her so sensibly, as yet beholding my father and mother; therefore, I really think, in kindness to her, we ought not to let whim creep in to her grief, to heighten it, and nourish its continuance; and that I ought to accompany Lady Frances; and—and—"

"And Miss De Clifford not to go until

you return: then let it be so, since you wish it," replied Lord Delamore, looking archly through his long eye-lashes.

"Oh! no, my lord; not so;" said his son, in evident alarm—"No, I would not disappoint Theodosia for the world.—Oh! no, I mean to go with Lady Frances, and you—you—Miss De Clifford, who can, better than any body, persuade my sister to see me."

"Well, my dear boy, I think it right you should go, since it is your wish; if your aunt permits, and your mother approves."

"I most readily permit, Theodosius, if he has *your permission* to *accompany Miss De Clifford*," said Lady Frances.

"And my cordial approbation," said Lady Delamore, smiling in rapture, "since it is to comply with his own wish, and to lead him to give comfort to my afflicted child."

"Well," said Lady Frances, addressing Lady Isabella, "I have given you some information of one of your brothers, now give me some of the other. Has Mr. Vil-

lars Harville yet made his conundrum, that was to puzzle every body?"

"I do not know what one you mean, madam?" replied Lady Isabella, in surprise.

"Oh! the one of his uncle Thony's white terrier's head, with the red eyes, perched on the black greyhound's shoulders."

Julia started, blushed with doubt and amazement; Ladies Hollowell and Selina turned pale, in alarm, and started too.

"You remember it, Miss De Clifford," continued Lady Frances, "since you were the frightful object who gave birth to that brilliantly witty idea the day you first went to Delamore-house, and received so memorable a reception."

"Then you know the occurrences of that day, Frances," said Lord Delamore, eagerly—"Will you oblige me by now relating them?"

"Lady Frances was not present, my lord, and may have been misinformed," exclaimed Lady Selina, trembling with terror—"I suppose Miss De Clifford herself has told Lady Theodosia; and so be-

tween them, they have made the story their own way."

"Your sagacity, madam, is for once mistaken," replied Lady Frances; "I was not *misinformed*, nor informed, by Lady Theodosia."

"Nor did I ever make violation of that promise, which I did give so in sincerity the day I did leave London, either directly or indirectly, Lady Selina; no, not even after I had the much great pain to find how ungenerous was the advantage taken of promise, made by sincerity, in quite belief it was to honour," said Julia, mildly, yet with great emotion.

"So! so! so!" exclaimed Lord Delamore, colouring with indignation. "Lady Frances, I now make it a point with you to relate all you know relative to that day."

Lord St. Orville, almost convulsed with sympathizing agitation, now, by an incontrolable impulse, grasped the trembling hand of Julia, with his own, as tremulous one; and she, believing the action inspired by pitying kindness, withdrew not her hand for some moments.

In compliance with her brother's request, Lady Frances related every particular of the memorable visit of our heroine to Delamore-house; and so faithfully, so circumstantially, that Julia was in amazement, and the copartners in the shameful transactions of that day overwhelmed with rage and consternation.

Although Lady Hollowell's defamation of our heroine had been told by her, in secret, to Lord Delamore, his lordship chose that Julia's vindication should be public, not doubting but the malicious calumniator had given hints upon the subject to some of his guests; but the recital of the insolence and humiliation his preserver had been exposed to beneath his roof; and the further proof it gave him of the defects of his long favoured child's heart, and of her hatred to her mother by fixing the period of her life, being despaired of, to perform such witty pranks, affected him so much, that he almost repented demanding the narrative before so many witnesses; and more particularly as he saw how much his wife and son were distressed at Julia's unmerited

treatment; but Lord St. Orville's distress was softened, by the powerful balm of exulting triumph, that his Julia's fame was cleared to its spotless purity, and even without the censure of imprudence.

"Bless me! how astonished I am!" exclaimed Lady Montalvan, in an audible address to Lord St. Orville; "I always conceived Miss De Clifford was a young lady of fashion and fortune, ward to Lord Ashgrove; and had no idea she had ever gone about answering advertisements, as an object of charity.—Dear! I wish I had known it, I am sure I would have relieved her; and not ——"

The indignation of Lord St. Orville was too powerful for concealment; and he was about to silence her unfeeling ladyship with a severe reproof, when he was prevented by Lord Delamore stopping the conclusion of her ostentatious insolence, by suddenly snatching Julia to his breast, exclaiming,

"Child of my heart! and friend of my bosom! forgive me, for thus subjecting you to the insults of the unfeeling. But I knew not such a recital as this was to

shock me, in the knowledge of what your exalted virtues had subjected you to meet with, from a child of mine; and in the moment too, when her exemplary mother was supposed by all to be at the point of death." And now turning to Lady Montalvan, he addressed her with all that awing severity his lofty indignant soul inspired.

"Permit me, Lady Montalvan, to inform you, that Miss De Clifford traces her descent even higher than the Montalvan's and the Delamore's; and even yet higher than mortal heraldry can soar too. She is the favourite offspring of Rectitude and Virtue; and her heart, which Heaven gifted with its choicest stores, led her to give her all; unhesitatingly to give it, to extricate her aged grandmother from a malicious persecution of an implacable enemy. Her exalted heart led her, at the dictates of duty, to deprive herself of affluence, and ultimately to subject herself to the insults of the cruel, the indelicate, the ostentatious, and the unfeeling."

Lady Montalvan was completely mortified; but thought it better not to have

recourse to her usual extricator from distress or embarrassment, tears; for she believed no one at this moment would dare to soothe or pity her.

Julia was so powerfully affected by Lord Delamore's kindness, with every other circumstance which assisted in agitating her, that she made an attempt to retire, but Lord Delamore would not let her.

"Stay, I intreat you, my child," he said, "and hear how I was led to add my insults too;" (and now his lordship recounted the malicious fabrication of Lady Hollowell, which was artfully calculated to throw an indelible censure upon the prudence of our heroine, and to place her fair fame in a most equivocal point of view.)

Lady Delamore, anxious that her beloved Julia's fame might be cleared to its own spotless purity, said, "I now find, Isabella, you were present during this visit of Miss De Clifford's. I know you are the child of probity; and I request you, unhesitatingly, to say whose informer has been most correct—Lady Frances Harcourt's, or Lord Delamore's?

Lord Delamore smiled, in delighted approbation, at his Emily; and Lady Isabella, in pitiable confusion, replied—

"My dear aunt, Lady Hollowell and Selina made me promise not to speak of that day, or they would never admit me into their funny parties of quizzing people again."

"Upon my word," said Lady Ennerdale, with as much anger as a professed beauty would suffer herself to betray, "I am extremely indebted to them, for initiating my child in such an amiable, praise-worthy sport.—But, as I look upon the exaction of a promise from a child, too young properly to comprehend the nature of one, a most unfair advantage, I take the crime of cancelling it upon myself, by commanding you immediately to obey your aunt."

"Then, mamma, in obedience to you, I tell aunt Delamore, that the information of uncle Delamore has all been ill-natured misrepresentation; while what Lady Frances has related is so faithful an account of all that occurred, it seemed to me as if some one had written down all in short-

hand at the moment, and that her ladyship told it from the minutes of the facts. As to with whom Miss De Clifford went away, I was the only one who know, to a certainty, as they set me to watch where Fitzroy took her to, for they were terribly afraid he should conduct her to Theodosia, and complain of them; so I watched them, and saw them go immediately to Mrs. Beville's room. —Mrs. Beville let them in herself; and afterwards I saw them, all three, Miss De Clifford, Horatio, and Beville, descend the stairs together; Miss De Clifford and Beville went off in aunt Delamore's coach; and Fitzroy returned into the house again."

"My dear child!" exclaimed Lady Delamore, "why, why did you not say, that Beville could extenuate you?"

"Would not that have been infringement for my promise?" the highly agitated Julia replied—"She was negotiator for my promise; and I would not bring into bad scrape with those she has known long time, Mrs. Beville, so much good and venerable."

Lady Hollowell now burst into so violent

a fit of risibility, that every one present believed she had, overwhelmed by shame and vexation, fallen into hysterics.

At length she exclaimed, still laughing immoderately,—" So, dear Lord Dela! how completely I have *hoaxed* you—quizzed your gravity famously. You were so madly infatuated about the De Clifford, that, 'fore Heaven, none other of us could get a civil thought of you; so in a little innocent revenge, I had a mind to plague you; so making up a solemn face, (which caused me an infinity of exertion) I fabricated this monstrous good one, and thought I should have expired with concealed mirth, at the long face I gave your mightiness, and the misery and consternation I threw you into. And now this prodigious fuss has proved a delicious climax. Monstrous good fun I have had by my joke; but seriously, upon honour, I meant to unsay it all, and set the girl's fair fame in the array of a snow-ball, before I left the castle."

" Whatever might have been the motives which actuated you, Lady Hollowell," replied Lord Delamore, with impressive gra-

vity, "I am satisfied, since now, before this goodly company, you have acknowledged 'all you ever uttered against the prudence of my much loved, inestimable ward, the mere fabrication of your mirth-directed imagination to quiz and worry me; and that ere you departed from Delamore castle you meant to *prove* her *immaculate fame, as spotless as the unsullied snow*.'"

"Right, quite right, most sapient Lord Dela!" said her unblushing ladyship, with disgusting *sang froid*.

CHAPTER V.

WE naturally suppose, that our readers wish to know by what means Lady Frances Harcourt became so well acquainted with Julia's mortifying adventure at Delamore-house; and as it is our anxious endeavour to afford them every gratification within the limits of our power, we hasten to lay before them some incidents which occurred, during the short stay of Ladies Frances Harcourt, and Theodosia Southerland, in London, on their way from Saxby-lodge to Black Tower abbey.

The day succeeding their arrival in town, an accident befel the carriage of Lady Frances, in King-street, Holborn. Her ladyship was alone in the carriage, and being assisted out of it, made her way from the assembling crowd into the nearest shop, which happened to be Mrs. Corry's,

Lady Fontsevern's nurse, and mother to her chambermaid.

In this shop, Lady Frances soon perceived the remains of visible agitation in every one belonging to it; and so much interest did the suppressed emotion of the family awaken in her mind, that after making some purchases, and giving a large order for more, she kindly inquired the cause of the apparent agitation she beheld.

Lady Frances now learned, from the weeping Mrs. Corry, the story already related by Lucy to our heroine, with the addition, "that about an hour before her ladyship's entrance, she had been arrested by her apothecary, who was son to her landlord, and just as the bailiffs were tearing her away from her family, an angel from heaven arrived in the form of a lady, who came with forty pounds to her relief, sent by another person, who chose not to appear in the charitable business, or even to disclose their name. Out of this forty pounds," Mrs. Corry said, "she had paid the apothecary's bill, and with the remainder she

should extricate herself, and helpless children, from their present difficulties; so now, all she had to do was to be thankful to heaven and her benefactor, whom she should never rest until she discovered."

As Mrs. Corry had been pretty communicative in her narrative, she mentioned having suckled Lady Fontsevern, whom Lady Frances instantly named as the secret benefactor.

"Oh! no, madam," Mrs. Corry replied, "not from her, certainly, who treats my poor sick child so unfeelingly, and sent me such a cruel letter."

Lady Frances, acquainted with the projected alliance between her nephew and Lady Fontsevern, now eager to learn all she possibly could of the disposition of the young baroness, craftily led on this simple (though well-meaning) woman, to tell her a long series of unkind and unfeeling treatment she and her children had experienced from Lady Fontsevern.

"I owe no gratitude to my lady, madam, for any kindness," said Mrs. Corry, "or I would die sooner than complain. I suckled

her, and my poor girl (who is with her) with the same milk; and I did my lady every justice, for which I have an annuity of twenty pounds, which my lord pays me very honourably; but further than that I never received from the family, though in case of every trouble and sickness I was always sent for. Many a night's rest have I lost for the family; and many a cloak and bonnet I have had spoiled, and many a cold caught trudging about London, in all weathers, to buy bargains for my lady, and her mother before her; but all that I should not mind, if I had ever received a smiling look, or civil word, or had my poor child been treated with kindness.

"Last winter, too, madam, when my young lady came up to town, she made me, and my poor girls, fag night and day, doing fancy-work for her dresses; and then our work never gave her satisfaction; and she beat us down of our price, and then paid our bills slower than any body; and it was to oblige her, by hurrying out of the waggon a box of patent net, come from Nottingham for her, which we were to tam-

bour, my poor son-in-law got his dreadful fall, and that she knew; and all the notice she took of it was, to send an order to get him into St. George's hospital, and that cut me to the heart, and I would not let him go from beneath my own roof; and then, madam, she would take my second girl, my right hand; she, who had all the ingenuity and taste, and gained business for me, by her cleverness, to be her chambermaid; and by her teazing temper, and keeping her up half the night, as well as all the day working for her, has destroyed the poor girl's health, nor will she let her come home to me to nurse her; and when I wrote to tell her of my distress, I got such a taunting letter in reply, it seemed very cruel to me in the midst of my affliction."

Lady Frances had now heard sufficient completely to close her heart against her niece elect; but still she anxiously panted to see this letter; and she spoke so compassionately, and with such soothing kindness to Mrs Corry, who, not lately accustomed to such sympathy, and with her heart now fully opened by that day's un-

expected gift from benevolence, did not require much persuasion to oblige Lady Frances, who soon had the desired gratification of perusing the following epistle.

Delamore castle,
Dec. 15*th*, 1801.

"Mrs. Corry,

"I am astonished you should apply to me in your distress, and am equally amazed at your not feeling ashamed to acknowledge your having any, when you are so liberally assisted by your annuity for suckling me.

"As to your own boys, had you not been too proud to ask him, Lord Westbourn would have had the charity to get them into some asylum for outcasts; but as to your eldest daughter, I have no pity for her, as she had no business to marry. It is very highly reprehensible in any one to marry, who has not means to support a family.—For my part, I was given my noble fortune for the exalted purpose of benefiting my fellow-creatures; therefore I am

determined not to injure society, by encouraging, in affording assistance to your daughter and her husband, other young people to act imprudently.—As to your son-in-law's illness, I offered every thing in my power at the time; but you disdained to let him enter an hospital; and now you see how deservedly pride is humbled.

"You are, as well as a proud woman, Mrs. Corry, a most ungrateful one.—After my taking (to serve you) your very ignorant girl, under all the disadvantages of her never having been in the capacity of a chambermaid before, you have the ingratitude to insinuate, that she is ill, and requires a mother's care.—Do you think, woman, that if she was really ill, I should not have advice for her? I, who am almost a proverb for my compassionate disposition. I tell you, nothing is the matter with your daughter, but incorrigible laziness; so I desire to hear no more of her imaginary illness, or of your improvident distress, or you will highly disoblige

"FONTSEVERN."

Lady Frances now determined, if it cost her the annuity of Mrs. Corry doubled, to get possession of this letter; to hasten with it to Delamore castle, to break off the meditated alliance, and save her beloved nephew from misery. Her compassion had been so much awakened for Mrs. Corry, her large family, and her dying son-in-law, that she had before determined upon assisting them; but now, having an interested motive added to her humane ones, she hastened to enquire in the neighbourhood the character of Mrs. Corry, which she found to be an extremely good one; and the next day, accompanied by Lady Theodosia, (whom anxiety to break off this ungenial alliance induced to leave for a morning, the melancholy nourishment of her grief) hastened to Mrs. Corry, to whom Lady Frances gave a draft on her banker for fifty pounds, to extricate her completely from her present embarrassments, and to procure immediately the best advice for her poor son-in-law, whose expences to any part of England she promised to defray, should his

physicians order him to any medicinal spring, or warmer climate.

Mrs. Corry was so overwhelmed by joy and gratitude, that it was not to be wondered at her readily giving up the unfeeling Lady Fontsevern's letter to Lady Frances, who now promised to be a steady friend to her and her children; and desired her to send, without delay, to order her daughter to quit the service of Lady Fontsevern, and return home.

They had just completed these arrangements, when the next door neighbour of Mrs. Corry unceremoniously bounced into the little back parlour to them. This intruder was an uncouth, though worthy man, who ran in the preceding day to see what he could do for poor neighbour Corry in her distress; and was consequently there when the stranger unexpectedly arrived with the gift of benevolence.

"I have found her out for you, Mrs. Corry!" he exclaimed, on entering—"I ax pardon, ladies; but I have only one word to say to Mrs. Corry, and then I will make my *obeisance*, and be gone.—I *spied* the

good lady, (who came like an angel to succour you yesterday) in *Common* Garden market.—It was such a sweet face, I should know it again among ten thousand; so what does I do, but *dogs* her home; and so she turns out to be rather a neighbour of our's, the wife of one Goodwin, bookseller, in Great-Russel-street. I know I am right, for I ax'd about her at the opposite shop. —Dang it, I'll pop home, and write out all my Christmas bills, that I may want books in a hurry, and I'll buy them of neighbour Goodwin, for the sake of his wife, who is as compassionate (Heaven bless her!) as she is pretty:" and now, making his promised obeisance, he hurried away.

Lady Theodosia, thus reminded of Mrs. Goodwin, regretted extremely to her aunt, on their way home to their hotel in Albemarle-street, that the melancholy state of her spirits prevented her from having the pleasure of calling upon that inestimable woman—" who," she added, " I have little doubt, is agent to my beloved friend, Julia De Clifford, in the relief of Mrs. Corry. Miss De Clifford's attendant is, I know,

extremely communicative, and about the age of this Corry girl. It is natural they should be much together, and mutual confidence of all their little secrets an obvious consequence, by which means Julia possibly became acquainted with the poor widow's distress. I know her genuine benevolence would lead her to seek concealment; and delicacy to Lady Fontsevern, (situated as she now is in our family, the wife elected by my father for poor Alfred) would enforce her anxiety for secresy."

Lady Frances, from all she had heard of our heroine from Lady Theodosia, and by Lady Delamore's letters, perfectly coincided in her niece's opinion; and, curious to see these worthy Goodwins, who had evinced such benevolence to this amiable orphan in her distress, as well as anxious to steal Lady Theodosia from her unavailing sorrow, by seeking all things that were likely to interest her, the moment she got to Albemarle-street, wrote a note to Mrs. Goodwin, requesting the pleasure of her company to tea that evening.—At the appointed hour, Lady Frances dispatched her coach for

Mrs. Goodwin; and Lady Theodosia, after the first moment of chagrined surprise, became not only reconciled to this (by her) unexpected visitor, but so charmed with her fascinating sweetness, and winning cheerfulness, that she was insensibly led by her from the contemplation of her own sorrows; and her attention arrested from the undeviating retrospection of the murder of poor Mandeville, was beguiled into interest for other themes.

Julia was an object so interesting to all, that she continued the unrivalled topic of their conversation. Encouraged to it by the aunt and niece, Mrs. Goodwin indulged her own affectionate friendship, by relating every anecdote she knew of Julia, from the hour they first met until that moment; and as all that could be known of her was only further proofs of the excellence of her disposition, Mrs. Goodwin omitted nothing "from her saint-like submission, to the cruel and violent Mrs. St. Clair, while her heart was wreathing, in secret anguish and horror, at the impiety of the dying atheist; her undeviating duty and attention to this

unnatural parent, and all that followed the death of Mrs. St. Clair, to Julia's first visit at Delamore-house, from all of insult and disappointment she suffered there, to her visit at Doctor Hargrave's.—How she was wooed by Fitzroy, and how forsaken by him; how she sustained his dereliction of her.—How she bore her sudden prosperity; and how sweetly, kindly, affectionately, she had undeviatingly, and in a manner delicate, as her own feelings, never ceased to pay them the most marked attentions; and to evince her powerful gratitude for the very little they had been able to do for her."

Not a tittle of what Mrs. Goodwin related failed to make its just impression on her auditors; and the insults which Julia received from the unworthy Lady Selina and her friends, they heard with the most potent indignation; and Lady Frances became as much enamoured with the virtues of our heroine, as she was disgusted with, and contemned the unfeeling Lady Fontsevern.

Lady Theodosia ventured to enquire, "If Julia was the benefactress of Mrs. Corry?"

Mrs. Goodwin blushed an affirmative; and said, "I am certainly the almoner of Miss De Clifford's secret charities, and she finds me full and sweet employment. The benevolence of Lord and Lady Delamore prevents her finding any objects to exercise her beneficence around Delamore castle; but I have instructions to act for her whenever I can find distress, and when she writes to me upon the subject, still saying, "I beseech for you, dear Mrs. Goodwin, betray not at all my name. Was I woman of consequence, I must, I do know very well, for examples good, reveal a great deal of my charities; but what to the world good will it do to know that Julia De Clifford gives, of her profusely supplied pocket allowance, a little every year to those who much do want it."

Lady Frances was herself so pleased with Mrs. Goodwin, and perceiving with pleasure, how much she had interested her niece, and drawn her from her sorrows, that she cordially invited her to dinner next day.

Doctor Sydenham next morning paid his compliments to Lady Frances, who was a

very old and valued acquaintance of his, when Lady Theodosia was so extremely pleased with him, that she requested her aunt "to invite him to dinner also; as Lord De Lisle was to dine with them, whom she was sure would be delighted with such a charming companion."

Doctor Sydenham, therefore, with Mrs. Goodwin, dined with Lady Frances, and the day passed so much to Lady Theodosia's satisfaction, that she invited herself to drink tea with Mrs. Goodwin the following evening; "when she should see," she said, "Mr. Goodwin, and all his lovely children, whom Miss De Clifford had taught her to venerate and love."

Lady Frances, and Lord De Lisle, extremely pleased by this voluntary exertion of Lady Theodosia's, accompanied her to tea at Mr. Goodwin's. All the fine, healthy, and beautiful children of Mr. Goodwin, now nicely and becomingly dressed by their fond, and not a little maternally proud mother, and Biddy O'Connor, were, by the desire of Lady Theodosia, in the drawing-room, and soon invited by her

ladyship; the younger ones, with brightly glowing cheeks, and sparkling eyes, were gathered round her, to talk of, and tell some endearing anecdote of their adored Miss De Clifford, each having some beautiful present to shew of hers to them; but what they seemed most to prize, were letters which she had written to every one of them, and some little matters they had all contrived to possess themselves of, left in the lumber of her room, after packing up; some remains of a pencil, shred of ribbon, or broken pasteboard box, which they preserved as sacred relics. "For," said they, "*these* belonged to herself, were her *own*, her very own; and therefore we love them better than all the fine and beautiful things she gave, and sent to us."

Mr. Goodwin, Charles, and Rosa, soon made their way to the esteem and admiration of their visitors, who all thought Mr. Goodwin highly pleasing in venerable excellence; Charles, a most interesting youth; and Rosa, a very lovely, unobtrusive, elegant, and unaffected girl.

CHAPTER VI.

As Julia had supposed, the castle this evening was visited by innumerable congratulating guests; and as Lord St. Orville had, by his marked, though silent homage to our heroine, betrayed his passion to every observer, it was now no longer a secret that his lordship was deeply in love with Miss De Clifford; and as she had ventured her own life to save his, it was naturally believed the attachment was mutual. Lady Delamore's affection for her had long been known; and this evening Lord Delamore's particular attention to her, and obvious partiality, with the circumstance of her being about to accompany Lord St. Orville on a visit to Lady Frances Harcourt, all combined to convince every one their union was determined upon; so that all, now guided by inclination or policy, hastened to worship the rising sun; and Julia, as the future

mistress of Delamore castle, received the most profound assiduities of adulating respect from those who eagerly surrounded her. The men all considered Lord St. Orville peculiarly fortunate in obtaining the heart of Miss De Clifford, while the ladies all agreed in thinking her the most lucky woman in existence; and several beheld her with the envenomed stings of jealousy and envy; as many a fair lady in the neighbourhood had long sighed in secret hopelessness for Lord St. Orville.

Lady Frances being a first-rate musician, Lord Delamore led a party to the concert-room, that his sister might be charmed with the unrivalled strains of his Emily and Miss De Clifford. They began a beautiful duet, which they were singing in the most fascinating stile, when Lord Heathland, fancying, now he was Lord Heathland, he must become more conspicuous in all his actions, on perceiving that every one was delighted with the highly finished melody they were hearing, thought it necessary to display his now double refined feelings, in every way, but by quite expiring, and twisted

and wreathed about in the most horrible contortions of face and figure, still believing he was making himself look right honourably interesting, until at length Lady Isabella, unable longer to restrain her risibility, to the astonishment and annoyance of every *amateur*, burst into a violent scream of laughter.

Lady Delamore and Julia ceased, in amazement. Every eye was turned in reproach on Lady Isabella, who, now painfully blushing in shame, exclaimed, "Indeed I could not help it, Lord Heathland made such hideous grimaces."

Lady Frances now hastily arose, and taking Lady Isabella by the hand, led her towards the door. "Go, unfeeling girl," she said, "go to your nursery, and get your doll and rattle; or, hold! take your marmoset with you, whose antics had power to draw your attention from sounds, which sweetly anticipated celestial melody."

Lady Delamore and Julia now interceding for Lady Isabella, Lady Frances permitted her to remain, upon a serious pro-

mise of good behaviour; while Lord Heathland suddenly drew his chair behind Lady Frances, who, seized with an uncommon fit of politeness, protested "she could not think of sitting with her back to so accomplished a *buffone*;" and ceremoniously drew her chair into a line with him; and he still continuing to retreat, she persisted in her civility, until the mortified and alarmed beau found the further progress of his retreat cut off by the wall of the room.

"What an infernal annoyance that wild cat is!" said Lord Heathland to his shadow—"Lady Hollowell, I wish from my soul all *old women* were to be buried alive. Was I king, I would most certainly——"

"Not make that injudicious law," exclaimed Lady Frances, quickly turning round upon him, "lest in a few years time you should become a victim to your own decree."

And now, Lady Montalvan perceiving the majority of the company seemed afraid of Lady Frances, and anxious to shew that the truly amiable had nothing to apprehend,

voluntarily took the seat which Lord Heathland slunk away from; and with all the bewitching tones and manners of simplicity, began to inform Lady Frances how devoted to the improvement of her mind she was. "I am sure too, Lady Frances," she said, "from your beautiful flow of words, and superior powers of conversation, that you have always been passionately fond of reading; and as you are, of all others, the model from which I should wish to form my mental perfections, will you have the goodness (if I do not presume too much by my question) to tell me what has been your principal study?"

"The art of tormenting," Lady Frances replied, with unchanging countenance—"a study in which I find you have arrived at such perfection, that you now can even rival me; with this difference—I am a professor of the art, who give my lectures publicly, and only to the great and affluent; while you practise in private, and give yours to your dependants, and those in humble life."—Lady Frances now arose with an austere look at the painfully mortified

young countess, and hastened to the piano-forte, to intreat another duet from Lady Delamore and Julia.

The succeeding morning Lord Westbourn and his daughter quitted Delamore castle, to proceed to the Duke of Avondale's. Lord Westbourn, now convinced that Lady Montalvan must never again become an inmate in a family, where he sought an alliance for her; and to the astonishment of every one, and the great chagrin of Miss Modely, Lady Hollowell this morning decamped with the silly Lord Heathland for London, saying, "she had unexpected business in town, and was happy to be protected on her journey by Lord Heathland," who went in her carriage with her, and her ladyship's woman acompanied his lordship's valet in his. The family of Delamore castle were astonished at this manœuvre; but so they got rid of this bold designing woman, they little cared by what means it was effected.

As this morning was uncommonly mild and beautiful for the season of the year, Lord St. Orville persuaded Julia to walk out

with him. Deeply entered into the subject, mutually delightful to them, of the bright prospects now open to Lord and Lady Delamore, of sweet and permanent happiness, they accidentally, (or rather instinctively led to it by Lord St. Orville) entered a most beautifully romantic little wood, situated in a valley, in the centre of which appeared a small amphitheatre of green sward, vying with the finest velvet for the softness of its surface, shadowed in its circle by the overhanging lofty pines, larch, cedar, and cypress, whilst, in picturesque meandering, murmured through it a rapid and pellucid stream, at the verge of which stood a very young willow, which seemed to promise, in its maturity, shade to all who reposed beneath its branches.

Julia, instantly struck by the beautifully romantic sombre appearance of this little spot, exclaimed, in admiration of it, and in wonder, that she had never before been conducted to, or had strayed into that part of the grounds.

"It is so out of the way, and the path to it is so uninviting, that it lures no stran-

ger to explore it; for so I wished it to be, to keep it sacred to those to whom only it could be interesting," replied Lord St. Orville—"Many hours have I passed in this spot. Since my last return, it has been my loved retreat, my only comfort;—but—but I trust it will not ever be my solitary haunt, and that to you it will become as interesting as it has long been to me, and that at some future period," he added in great emotion, "you will instruct me in what form that building shall assume, which I purpose to erect here.—For to you, my beloved *friend*, this spot has long been consecrated; and you, I hope, will teach me how to make it most interesting to you."

Julia's astonishment and agitation would have effectually destroyed her power of answering, even had she known what reply it was possible for her to make. She was standing close to the young willow; and now in her confusion she encircled it with one arm, and laid her cheek against it, to conceal her roseat blushes.

Lord St. Orville caught her unemployed

hand. "Oh! Julia," he said, "is it intuitive sympathy that attracts you thus to my little nursling? Julia! sweet *friend!* that is a scion of a tree you venerate and love."

Julia's astonishment increased, and falteringly she said, "My lord! what can you mean?"

"It is now more than three years since I planted this precious scion," he continued, with augmenting emotion, "and I have ever since (when at home) watched its health and growth with the ardent fondness of a parent, anxiously attending to the increasing powers of an only and adored child. During my temporary absences, the principal gardener has himself attended to it, and, I believe, with the most religious care; because I told him I prized it more than my existence. I brought it, Julia, from the banks of the Arno—from the *Capanna di Violetta*—Julia!" and tears now trembled in his eyes—"it is an actual scion from that now luxuriant tree, planted by your father to shadow the urn he consecrated to the ashes of his Adelaide."

Julia articulated a faint cry from emotion, sunk on her knees; and, bursting into tears, encircled the little bole in her arms, and imprinted on it ardent and innumerable kisses of pious reverence.

The highly agitated Lord St. Orville attempted not to interrupt the affecting effusions of her filial piety and affection for some moments; at length, encircling her waist with his arm, he gently raised her.

"Julia, sweet beloved friend!" he said, "whatsoever is precious to you, is sacred to me, and highly I venerate these touching ebullitions of your susceptible heart; but I cannot, cannot longer permit your kneeling upon the damp sward. When the season shall allow of it, without peril to your health, you will come here often I trust, and sometimes, I hope, you will suffer me to attend you."

His lordship raised our heroine from the ground, for as it seemed his wish, she made no effort to prevent him; and now he tenderly led her to a rustic bench, situated near the willow: his arm still encircled the

weeping Julia, who, sensibly affected by gratitude to him for rearing this inestimable treasure, made no attempt to withdraw from his support; but soon overcome by tender recollections of her early youth, when knowing only that kindness and affection existed by experiencing them from her beloved father, her tears flowed so abundantly, and she sobbed so convulsively, that her head unconsciously sunk upon Lord St. Orville's shoulder for a place of rest.

His lordship, sensibly affected, now said all that the sympathizing tenderness of his heart could dictate to compose her; and, at length, when the first effusions of touching fond remembrance had subsided, and that a consciousness of her situation promptly led her to raise her head from Lord St. Orville's shoulder, and to withdraw from his supporting arms, she mentally articulated, "How much more sweet and amiable, is friendship then than love! In whatsoever affliction I had, for mine, to dare I never could (even in the quite unconsciousness, as now) to lay my aching

head upon the shoulder of Fitzroy; for his encroaching raptures taught for me to shrink from the ease of confidence in him, and led me ever to much repellent manner. Oh! then, how greatly more for sweet and amiable friendship is, than love!"

Julia now, in the sweetest tones of trembling sensibility, ventured to ask Lord St. Orville, "How he did know so well of her dear father's willow?"

"Did you not yourself, sweet friend, describe your fond and faithful recollection of it, to—to—to Lady Storamond? And the moment I heard of it, I determined to possess myself of a scion to convey to England, and here to rear it, that there might be at Delamore castle something that Julia De Clifford should prize." Lord St. Orville replied, in a tone of such touching tenderness, it thrilled to the heart of Julia.

A pause for some moments ensued, which our heroine, almost subdued by perplexity, amazement, and perturbation, had not power to break; but at length his lordship continued.

"I easily found the *Capanna di Violetta*. It was untenanted, and in the care of old *Pietro.*"

"Oh! poor old Pietro!" exclaimed Julia, gratefully, "*he* was not ever unkind to me."

"Of that I was soon convinced, by the affection he evinced for you in every word he uttered, and the idolatry with which he almost worshipped me, when he found I had so lately seen you."

"Seen me! you, Lord St. Orville, had seen me! Oh! gracious Heaven! where, where, to see me, did you?" exclaimed Julia, in the most powerful agitation.

Lord St. Orville was now little less agitated than our heroine, and quite disconcerted with himself for being so unguarded. "Oh!" he replied, "it was abroad, Miss De Clifford, but exactly where, or when, I must not tell you now; but long, very long, I find it cannot be, until I must presume to disclose many surprizing circumstances to you, for the painful secrets of my heart are panting to—to—But, dear Miss De Clifford, how sweet and lovely

was the *Capanna di Violetta;* how interesting every spot to me. Pietro led me to the proprietor, and soon I became the purchaser of the loved place of your nativity, Julia; and Pietro most willingly became my domestic. Oh! sweet friend! he—(for you were too angelic to complain)—he told me of the cruelty of Mrs. St. Clair to you; and oh! what tortures that information added to my—my ——"

"But, Miss De Clifford, what lovely and affecting anecdotes of your childhood has he from time to time related to me; and I should have brought him with me to England, only that he was attached to the premises, and therefore likely to preserve my willow, and its sacred companion, from every injury; and on him too I found my dependence for the execution of another important trust was not ill placed. I will tell you (for I know it will feel like sweetest balm to your affectionate heart) he defends from every sacrilegious violation, and preserves, in the most flourishing state, a plantation of the choicest evergreens around the tomb of your beloved father."

"Oh! Lord St. Orville!" Julia articulated; but she attempted to add no more; for the sweetest emotions of gratitude and tender sensibility arose in fullest force to subdue her powers of elocution; and now, concealing her face with her handkerchief, she wept abundantly—the tears of gratitude and melancholy satisfaction for such soothing attentions paid to all that remained of her beloved father, and paid by Lord St. Orville, made the incense doubly sweet and soothing to her heart.

The tone in which she uttered, "Oh! Lord St. Orville!" expressing so feelingly, even more than the most elaborate speech could have conveyed, went resistlessly to his lordship's heart, awakening at once a tumult of sensations there responsive to the tender pathos the sound came fraught with.

At length Julia was recalled from the fond remembrance of the friend she had lost, to the recollection that the one so near her required some acknowledgments for all that series of tender, affecting kind-

nesses, which her heart so sensibly felt. Blushing and trembling, she began the attempt; but Lord St. Orville, perceiving her agitated embarrassment, although his heart panted to hear all she would say, as her voice now thrilled with the promise of every hope for him; yet, in the truth of love, considering the tranquillizing of her feelings, his first anxious care, he hastily interrupted her, by gently taking her hand, and raising her from the bench she sat upon.

"Come, sweet friend," he said, "I conjure you, come, from this interesting, but affecting spot, where, by some resistless impulse, I have been led to talk of things I wished you not yet to know, nor ever, unless that at some future happy period of my life I might be permitted to visit with you the loved spot of your nativity."

"Oh!" she exclaimed, in the most melting tone of anxious enquiry, "do you, do you then think, for reality, the permission will ever be for me, with you, to visit the much dear banks of Arno?"

"Miss De Clifford," he replied, now faltering and trembling too, "that will totally depend upon yourself."

"Then—then—is quite certainty for me, that I shall go with you," replied Julia, artlessly clasping her hands in the sudden emotion of joy; and smiling so sweetly in the delight of happy expectation, that with the utmost difficulty her adoring companion could restrain the impulse of falling at her feet, and acknowledging—"That, as his wife, his ardent hope was she would accompany him."—"But," added Julia, her voice, and every look changing at once to sadness, "when I do see your much tender care of my own father's loved retreat beneath his very willow; when for me is to behold your great deal sweet, soothing and sacred attention, to his last sad resting place, how all will affect me!"

"But then, sweet friend, will you not have me with you, who, with anxious tenderness, will strive to console and soothe you?" he replied, gently retaking her hand, and pressing it with tremulous affection.

"Oh! true," replied our heroine, tears

now rushing in trembling radiancy to her eyes; "and, in very certainty, through all my late much griefs, I have still found you in very next to heaven, for my best kind soother."

By this time, they had entered the more frequented part of the grounds; and at this moment, so interesting to Lord St. Orville, Lady Isabella came bounding towards them, exclaiming, "I have been seeking you this half hour. Miss Modely told me, 'you were in the grounds, and that you wanted some one to join your party.'" And now, taking his lordship's arm, she terminated a *tête-à-tête*, which was rapidly leading to an eclaircissement.

CHAPTER VII.

NOTHING of moment occurred during the remainder of this day; and, in the succeeding morning, at about eleven o'clock, Lady Frances, Julia, and Lord St. Orville, with their respective attendants, set out for Black Tower abbey in Wiltshire. Lord and Lady Delamore made Lady Frances promise soon to visit them again; and with the most affectionate regret parted with Julia and their son, whom they charged with kind letters, and a thousand tender remembrances to their afflicted child, who they hoped to see shortly return with them from Black Tower abbey.

They slept one night upon their journey; and as Lady Frances would not travel in the dark, the evening might have appeared long to many individuals; but, collected round a cheerful fire, all excelling in the talent of conversation, and all highly interesting to each other, the evening seemed short as

swift-winged time could make it. Lady Frances adored her nephew; and Julia had so completely fascinated her, in every way, that she felt no vapid moment in their society. Lord St. Orville, sincerely regarding Lady Frances, and seated by the object of his ardent love, thought only of time, as it would lead to the moment of separation; and, for some days, it had been forcibly striking upon Julia's observation, that no hours fled so rapidly, as those in which she conversed with Lord St. Orville.

About an hour before dinner-time, next day, Lady Frances and Julia arrived at the abbey. Lord St. Orville, fearing the effect his unexpected appearance might have upon his sister, stopped at the lodge; a precaution which proved to have been very judicious, as the ardent Theodosia was waiting in the court ready to clasp her beloved Julia in her arms the moment she alit from the carriage. Tender and affecting was their meeting. Lady Theodosia wept the bitter tears of agonized affliction upon the bosom of our heroine; and the pearly drops of sympathising friendship fell from Julia's

eyes upon the pallid cheek of the so lately blooming Theodosia.

Lady Frances informed Lord De Lisle where he would find his beloved friend; when, on the wings of impatient affection, he flew to the arms of Lord St. Orville, whom he had not seen since his last return to England; and when Lady Theodosia would allow Julia to quit her often repeated embrace, our heroine was introduced to Mrs. Wynne, a widow of fifty, a most valuable friend of Lady Frances Harcourt, who chiefly resided at Black Tower; and the moment it was possible for Julia to introduce the subject, she cautiously informed Lady Theodosia, "that her brother, longing most impatiently to fold her once more to his bosom, and not longer subscribing to the reasonableness of her delaying to indulge her friends in the gratification of seeing her, was intent upon very shortly coming to the abbey; so that soon she might be in almost momentary expectation of his arrival."

"If any thing could now make me joyful," said Lady Theodosia, "it would be to

hear I am still dear to the affection of my brother; and I believe my dear Alfred is right, in forcing me to see him; since the longer the interview is deferred, the more I shall dread it, and be unequal to sustaining it."

"Then, why delay it a moment?" said Lady Frances—"It is but one effort of fortitude, Theodosia, that will be amply repaid by consolation."

"Then—then—is my dear Alfred already here," almost franticly, exclaimed Lady Theodosia, wildly running to the 'drawing-room door, and vehemently calling him. In a moment she was encircled by her tender brother's arms; and, in a moment more, she fainted in them.

When this poor afflicted young woman recovered from her swoon, and that the agitation of this joy and grief-blended meeting had sufficiently subsided to admit of making observations in her appearance, Lord St. Orville and Julia with pain beheld how strikingly attenuated was her form, how sunk her sparkling eyes, and pale the cheeks, where the sweetest roses of health

had bloomed in brilliant beauty. They also saw, with sympathising pity, the melancholy assiduity with which Lord De Lisle attended to her every look and action. If she sighed, how deep was the sigh re-echoed from his bosom; and if her countenance betrayed a saddened look, how eloquent was the responsive dejection that his betrayed.

At the request of Lady Theodosia, Julia occupied a bed in the same room with her; but sleep for the first two nights was chased away by the melancholy lamentations of Lady Theodosia for the murder of her lover. While absent from Julia, she could refrain from the horrid detail; but now, in the presence of her friend, she chilled her blood with horror, by the recital of the direful catastrophe which tore poor Mandeville from life and her; and Julia, for the sake of her suffering friend, called up every particle of firmness she possessed, to sustain her grief-rent faculties at the most dreadful intelligence.

The morning after Julia's arrival at Black Tower abbey, when she made her appear-

ance at breakfast, Lord St. Orville was so much terrified at her wan, languid, and dejected looks, that, in his alarm, he softly, but eagerly, whispered,

"Oh! Julia, I must take you hence. Too plainly I perceive how my sister has made you pass your hours for rest. Cruel Theodosia! how could she do so?"

"Hush!" she replied; "believe she will not continue to do so. It is to her very greatly benefit; for me, not material injury. She does say so much incessantly of poor, poor Mandeville, that I think, for very certainty, the poignancy of her grief will make its evaporation in this soothing vent for her affliction."

Julia's belief was just; each succeeding day and night Lady Theodosia shed fewer, and less bitter tears, and talked with less piteous lamentation of poor Mandeville; and, at length, both her brother and Julia perceived, as their pity less excited, allowed them unbiassed observation, that to deplore Mandeville seemed not to minorate the grief of her heart, more than did the recapitulation of the kind, consoling, hu-

mane, and amiable conduct of Lord De Lisle to her.

Julia had, in her turn, innumerable incidents to relate, all so interesting to Lady Theodosia, that they beguiled her grief of many an hour's indulgence; and the history of her father's sorrows (now a secret no longer to be inviolably kept by Julia) caused her tears of the tenderest sympathy to flow; but soon they turned to those of joy, at the happy prospect now opened to her parents of permanent felicity, and though so late, so pure and perfect.

"Now, now," she exclaimed, "the vile, unnatural scorpion, is discovered to my father; her power for stinging my beloved mother is destroyed. But is it not strange, Julia; and if we dare to question the decrees of Providence, we should murmur that Selina, the only unamiable child (may I not say so without presumption?) of my parents, should be so much more fortunate than my dear Alfred and myself? She has been allowed to wed the object, she said, possessed her affections; whilst my poor brother and I are doomed, by unpropitious

love, to a life of misery. For poor Alfred, there may be a gleam of hope; yet, to wish it realized, would be absolute wickedness. I mean, it is possible for Lord Storamond to die; but the dead cannot rise again into mortality; and my life is therefore decreed to be a life of lorn singleness; for never again can I love, never can the heart know a second *real* attachment; at least, if it does, it proves such instability of mind, that the love of such a heart is not worth possessing."

"Oh! say not that," replied Julia, blushing deeply, and looking infinitely distressed —"oh! say not that, dear Lady Theodosia! for I have the much fear that I shall love again: in some time, long hence, when meet I do with somebody, whom I cannot at all help but to love."

"Dear Julia, your case is widely different from mine. Your lover was chased from your heart by the arbitrary voice of principle, which you most dutifully obeyed. Although love was torn from your heart violently, it was effectually. The basis, esteem, sunk at once, and left no tender re-

collection of the amiable perfections of Fitzroy, for lingering love still to cling to, and faltering to rest upon. The more you think of Fitzroy, in his atheism and profligacy, the more perfect your cure becomes, whilst my love was direfully torn from me, in my full belief of his perfection; nor have I since had cause to change one high-wrought idea of him. Still, therefore, with my love, my approbation of his virtues turns for ever to his memory; still venerating in my regret, and still adoring the excellence of the lover I lament: therefore, for me to love again, would be unnatural, barbarous, perfidious profanation of my love for Mandeville; and, if I ever do, may Heaven———"

"Make you much blest!" exclaimed Julia, almost franticly interrupting her. "Make not rash vow, I conjure for you!— Let not the mania for enthusiastic grief lead you to future misery. You have now conviction that you cannot again ever love. If your conviction is just, what need for you of vows to bind you, to what your heart would lead you to? If otherwise, would the

singleness from compulsion make good proof for your constancy? or be the tribute pure from your heart to love, and Mandeville? Sweet friend, say not protestation; but, as time makes travel, obey the then calmed feelings of your heart. To which-soever way they lead you, may it be to great deal happiness; and for this aspiration I will allow for you, to join with me, in an invocation to sacred Heaven."

Lady Theodosia threw herself into the ready arms of our heroine; exclaiming— "Oh! Julia, surely you are the guardian spirit of our family, sent to lead us all to right and happiness!"

In the course of the day after Lord St. Orville's arrival at Black Tower abbey, he related to Lady Theodosia the whole of the eventful skating adventures in Delamore Park, when her father, brother, and friend, seemed to become dearer to her heart for the perils which had encompassed them; and now the most enthusiastic gratitude was added to her former fervent attachment to Julia; but while her brother was relating the interesting circumstances, she, with

joyful astonishment, felt the dawning of a suspicion, that the beautiful fascinating Julia De Clifford had taught her brother inconstancy to Lady Storamond; and fervently she hoped, that he might prove the "somebody whom she could not at all help but to love." Every passing moment this belief strengthened in Lady Theodosia's mind, bringing sunshine to her chilled heart, until no longer able to bear any uncertainty relative to such a fondly cherished hope, she questioned her brother, and drew from him his full confidence.

From the certainty of her parents happiness, and full of high raised hope of her brother's, Lady Theodosia derived from sympathy something so consoling to her heart, it seemed to rob her of a considerable share of her dejection; and as she became less sad, the melancholy of Lord De Lisle decreased in proportion; and Lord St. Orville, now in all the flattering visions of expected happiness, his health restored by the removal of mental misery, and his natural cheerfulness returning fast to its native

bounds, now exerting himself for various causes, became the essence of life to them all. Julia, inspired by him, (whom every hour she saw become more fascinating,) aided his cheerfulness by her sweet and chastened playful vivacity. Lady Frances was unusually gay, and Mrs. Wynne was always lively; so that among them they often lured into their society the real Lord De Lisle, whimsically arch, and pleasingly mirthful; and sometimes now beguilded Lady Theodosia into a smile, or an effort to say something approaching to a repartee.

At the expiration of a week, Lady Frances was compelled to leave this, to her most interesting little party at Black Tower abbey, under the auspices of the amiable Mrs. Wynne, and set off to London on most important business.

Upon the discovery of the supposed Mary's real birth, it had been determined by Mrs. Fermor and Mr. Temple, that no persons further (except the professional men employed) should participate in the secret, until the opinion of the lord-chan-

cellor should be obtained; but, upon mature deliberation, they agreed that the spirit and energy of Lady Frances Harcourt would make her an useful and desirable auxiliary; and the sister to Lord Delamore espousing the cause, would give it more importance they thought, in the estimation of those employed to lay it before the court of chancery, than merely the untitled gentlewoman, Mrs. Fermor, could do.

Mr. Temple's confidential clerk was therefore dispatched with a letter from Mrs. Fermor upon the subject to Lady Frances. Powerful was the astonishment, and potent the joy, Mrs. Fermor's letter, and the communications of the clerk, imparted to the mind of Lady Frances, who had ever beheld her supposed niece with horror and detestation, and Mary Mildmay with esteem. To hurl this vile blot of infamy from a place in her family, which so long she had usurped; to remove this rankling thorn from the bosom of her beloved Emily, and to teach her reprehensible, once tenderly beloved brother, what a dupe he had been to the arts of his infamous mistress, gave her the purest joy, and at once

she entered heart, soul, and purse, into the cause of her injured niece.

Instantly she resolved to set out for Delamore castle, to prevail upon our heroine to return with her to Black Tower, to be her poor Theodosia's comforter, during her necessary absence in town; but, though fascinated with Julia's character, yet jealous now of Lady Theodosia's affection for Mary, whom she had known from her earliest days, she anxiously asked, and with some ill-disguised asperity too,

"Why her wishes led her to seeing Miss De Clifford before her early friend, the amiable and ever interesting Mary?"

"Not from estranged affection, or caprice, believe me, madam," Lady Theodosia replied—"Mary is dear as ever to my heart; but she is the last person in existence whom I should now wish to see. I think I should less shrink from my father's presence than from hers. So enthusiastic is her affection for my mother, that was I to see her yet, though attachment to me would teach her heart to expand, her arms to open to receive me, still would her ra-

diant eye ask me, with the overpowering language of inflexible rectitude, 'How, Theodosia, could you grieve such a mother as yours?' "

Lady Frances, satisfied with this reply, set out for Delamore castle, where her recoiling contempt and horror at the vile impostor as our reader may now perchance remember, led her prudence to forget its necessary forbearance.

Once again, Lady Frances Harcourt left her home for the purposes of benevolence, and set out for London; attended the first stage by Lords St. Orville and De Lisle; the latter of whom she understood meant to join his mother at Delamore castle, as soon as Miss De Clifford should arrive at Black Tower abbey, to comfort Lady Theodosia; but as Lord St. Orville unexpectedly accompanied her, his lordship begged permission from Lady Frances to prolong his stay, having had lately so few opportunities of indulging in the loved society of this dear and matchless friend: a permission she readily granted; and clearly she saw his fervent

attachment to her afflicted niece, whom she fondly hoped, at a future period, would be led, by this amiable young man, to forget the unfortunate murdered Mandeville; and now, when setting off upon her second stage to London, she parted from her young and handsome escorts, she kindly said—

"Dear children, make yourselves as happy as you can at Black Tower. My poor Theodosia claims, and has the kind attentions of you all; but remember, St. Orville, I will not have my Miss Paragon neglected."

Lord St. Orville smiled in gratitude; and felt that charge to him was totally unnecessary.

CHAPTER VIII.

We have already trespassed so much upon the time and patience of our readers, that we cannot now lengthen our history, by entering into every *minutiæ* of how Lord St. Orville continued to woo our heroine, in so small a party as that assembled at Black Tower abbey; where all knowing his attachment, and anxious that it should prove auspicious, he experienced few interruptions to his constant, delicate, and impressive assiduities, and scarcely now ever from her elbow, she was each hour more and more convinced she had guessed, most truly, the day of her introduction to Lord St. Orville's little nursling willow, (when returned to her own room, and meditating upon all he had said) that she, herself, and not Lady Storamond, had been the object of his secret affection. A retrospection of all his conduct relative to herself, every turn, look, and movement of his, since she

first beheld him, all now combined to confirm her in this belief. Since he had seen her abroad, she thought all was probable; not that Julia's vanity led her to believe she must captivate the moment she was beheld: but, modestly supposing, "that when he saw her, she pleased his fancy, and that the enthusiastic friendship and partiality of her Cecilia, painting her in all the glowing colours her affectionate heart presented her with, had, by her high-wrought praises of her, led him on, by degrees, to feel an interest for her, and then, to love." And now believing it almost certain, that all Lord St. Orville's grief and illness were occasioned by her engagement to his terrible cousin, her sympathising pity and distress for him were making their sensible effect upon her susceptibility, and her heart whispered to her, "that it was very possible, in some time hence, not perhaps quite so long as a whole year, if she was not deceived in her belief of Lord St. Orville's attachment to her, he might prove the somebody whom at all she could not help but to love."

In a few mornings after Lady Frances Harcourt's departure for London, as Julia was looking over one of the daily papers, she suddenly uttered a scream of joy, dropped the paper in agitated tremor, clapped her hands in ecstasy, arose from her seat, instantly sat down again, and burst into tears.

Lord St. Orville, trembling with agitated sympathy, anxiously and tenderly demanded the cause of her violent perturbation.

"There," she sobbed out, "look at it; read it for yourself, and be so glad as I am."

His lordship now took up the paper, which Julia, in the enthusiasm of her joy, instantly snatched from his hand, pressed it to her heart, and kissed, and re-kissed it, before she returned it to him.

"There!" she now said, "look! and be so joyful as I am. Your uncle, my dear, dear benefactor, and new father, is to Portsmouth come, so safe with his whole fleet, and brought with him (oh! so joyous for my heart too!) my own Cecilia; her dear hus-

band, and her lovely babes, all in his own ship, so good for safety." And now, after pointing out the paragraph to him, she laid her head upon the table near her, and wept for joy.

Lord St. Orville read the paragraph she pointed to, and more, which her wild transports allowed her not to see. "That immediately after they all landed at Portsmouth, Lord Ashgrove had struck his flag, and set off for the Admiralty; and Lord and Lady Storamond, and suite, for their seat in Wiltshire."

Lord St. Orville's agitation now became as powerful as Julia's, only that he wept not.

"St. Orville," exclaimed Lord De Lisle, "then we must set off without delay, to welcome our dear uncle home."

"Surely, surely," returned Lord St. Orville, "but one word with you, Henry." And now with Lord De Lisle he quitted the room. In about twenty minutes Lord De Lisle returned, and sent Lady Theodosia to her brother. At the expiration of another twenty minutes, her ladyship and Lord St.

Orville returned; when Mrs. Wynne, considering she was left by Lady Frances at Black Tower as a *chaperon*, not a *duenna*, and supposing these young people might have something to say to each other, upon family affairs, ere they parted, good-naturedly retired.

Lord St. Orville now hastily began to talk of their projected departure. "I do not think, De Lisle," said he, "there can be the smallest necessity for our setting out before dawn of day to-morrow; for by the date of Lord Ashgrove's arrival, and his rapid mode of travelling, I am certain he reached London the night before last. I know he can have but little business at present with the Admiralty; and that, eager to visit Delamore castle, we shall find him there to-morrow; so that if we set off now, and directly shape our course for London, I am confident we shall miss him."

Lord De Lisle, happy to adopt an opinion so consonant to his wishes, most perfectly coincided with Lord St. Orville in his ideas upon the subject, and now they both arranged to set off for Delamore castle at

five o'clock in the morning; then after a little deliberation, and calculation of time and distance, Lord St. Orville thought they need not set out before seven: to this his cousin most readily agreed. In a moment more Lord St. Orville thought eight o'clock would be quite time and time enough; and at last so nicely he calculated that he discovered they might very well breakfast at Black Tower, and with four high-mettled horses to their chaise, arrive by dinner-time at Delamore castle; and Lord De Lisle happening fortunately to be in a most acquiescent humour, their unanimity was most perfect.

The tears of joy, unlike those of grief, are not of long duration; and Julia's smiles and joy-illumined eyes now came breaking forth like the brilliant sun after a gentle shower; and though still trembling with agitation and delight, asked Lord St. Orville innumerable questions, (all of which she had asked a hundred times before) about who of all the family her dear new father resembled most in face and manners? What sort of man Lord Storamond was? and every

thing relative to the sweet, beautiful babes, (for still she persisted in her idea of their superlative beauty, although Lord St. Orville had assured her they were very plain) whom she should love—oh! so dearly, because they were Cecilia's."

Lord St. Orville considered the answering and re-answering all Julia's questions, such delightful employment, that they seemed as much pleasure for him to reply to as for her to ask. At length, Lady Theodosia, with something approaching to one of her long dormant arch smiles, said—

"Now come, dear Julia, since Alfred has answered you every question in the possibility of affection to ask, about these precious beings, do give the poor soul a little respite, and in your turn answer some of my interrogations; or rather, as I hate the tediousness of chatechising, draw me up at once a little narrative of the rise and progress of this mighty friendship of yours for Lady Storamond."

"I have not occasion; for very surely I have made such narrative before for you, Lady Theodosia."

"Never, Julia; you have talked incessantly of her, but never entered into any particulars of where or how you met, or what sort of a Goth or Vandal she is, or how your affection first struck you. Come, I long to know the symptoms of potent friendship."

Julia smiled in joy to see her friend so like herself again, and hastened to comply.

"You know very well, Lady Theodosia, that grandmamma did leave me at the convent of Santo Sebastiano, when for Malta she sailed: I never did exceedingly much like any convent I was left in, for I never was too well treated in any, but Santo Sebastiano was more terrible for me than any other. I had no money to buy the favour of the nuns, and my dress was so great deal shabby the boarders had much contempt for me, as until my young, first benefactor" (and Julia blushed the deepest tint of crimson, and her heart beat perceptibly) "came on the tender wings of benevolence for me, and left his pity's gift, which made me able to wear mourning for grandmamma, I was always dress-

ed like a *contadinélla* in her all-day clothes."

"There were at Santo Sebastiano many boarders; they were in general girls of consequence, and at their home having the sad dependants to make sport of, they could not be at all happy without having some child to misfortune to make tease of. I was so friendless and forlorn I was an object for their pastime to plague, but it was not much easy matter for them to tease me, for having no attachment in my heart, they could not make wound for me through mortified affection; and unkindness was so long custom for me to find, I had got the feeling insensible to it; but at last they did puzzle out the right way, and it was to say for me, 'The English were beaten by the French; the English ran away, and were the cowards, and much fools;' and that did put me in very great deal of passions; for at all I could not bear that my father's countrymen should not be worthy of being his countrymen, yet still I did persist to say, 'I knew exceedingly well from history

they were not the cowards, nor cruel, nor fools.'

"But at length one day I did hear them say a great deal of an elopement, 'and the fugitives were overtaken,' they said, 'and parted by the lady's guardian, a cruel Englishman, and not any but Englishman could have been so barbarous;' and I did think, for very certainty, all they did say was to plague me, as their custom led them to; but when summoned to dinner in the *Refettorio*, I did find, for once, they said true; for there was indeed the stranger they did say was come for confinement to our convent, and she was at the abadessa's table, seated by her, and the oldest *monaca* in the community."

"Oh! poor soul!" exclaimed Lord De Lisle, "what a miserable birth she had of it."

"Dear Julia, describe her for me," said Lady Theodosia.

"She had for dress the English riding habit, which she did wear the time all she remained with us," said Julia; "her hat was off, and her much lovely dark auburn

hair cut short, but not quite for crop, formed the prettiest of nature's own curls upon her ivory forehead, yet making parting by negligence in quite becoming way, displaying, for all much possible advantage, the most transcendently beautiful and intelligent countenance I had ever at all seen *then*." Julia's eyes now turned intuitively towards Lord St. Orville, when encountering his ardent gaze she blushed, and bent her timid glances to the ground.

"What!" said Lady Theodosia, with one of her long absent, arch smiles, "and do you still continue to think she resembles Alfred? Surely, if she is so very beautiful, you flatter him exceedingly, by saying he is like her?"

"I do very certainly think the resemblance much forcible, and not in smallest flattery for Lord St. Orville," Julia replied with quickness, and then recollecting how highly she had complimented his lordship, blushed again, and added in the hesitating tones of timidity—"You know for woman we must suppose she has the natural superiority for beauty."

"Oh! no doubt," said Lady Theodosia; "but pray proceed, and tell us how she seemed to relish her enviable situation among the ancients."

"Why she appeared not greatly comfortable certainly: I could eat no dinner, Lady Theodosia, for making much observation of her sweet (and as my thought was) heavenly countenance—Oh! how it did interest me!—Her unhappiness made for my heart the sadness from pity. Much deep pensiveness clouded her beautiful face; she seemed in embarrassment, great deal terrible; and when the *madre* or the *sorella* said for her, the bright blush did come so lovely to her cheeks, and her answers were sweet and gentle, but they were in that tone for sadness which thrilled through my very heart."

"Quite a heroine, creating friends by every look and accent. But did not the husky tone of her voice grate discordantly upon your delicate ear?"

"No, no, Lady Theodosia. It was for melody itself, yet for certainty it was tinctured with something great deal singular,

as if little hoarse from bad cold, which I did believe it for, but now, from what you say, have supposition it was her natural voice. But exceedingly surprised I was, when from dinner we arose, to make observation of her extraordinary height; and when walk away she did with the abadessa, although her movements were all perfection of gracefulness, yet something there was I did wish not so. The Sicilian girls did call it spirited, but for me was bad fear it had approach to masculine, and I was right, for it was: and in all for propriety, Lady Theodosia, this is her alone fault, yet for her must be excuse, since with boy-cousins she made her education, for so her father's whim was; but if she did catch the air for man, by partaking of their exercise, so she did acquire too the information for clever one, as surely not ever was female mind more beautifully cultivated for perfection, nor ever was female mind more sweet and lovely in all of delicacy's refinements."

"But what passed when this giantess first observed you?" said Lady Theodosia.

"Oh, say not giantess, for soon you will find how much sweet and amiable she was. From the time we the *Refettorio* quitted I was great deal anxious to see her more, and something to do (if it was for my possibility) to make smaller her afflictions; but in soon time my sad thought was, 'What alas! can so insulated being as I am do if I even say, to her she may have consideration for my being presumptuous, and I do know too well I have not at all powers to please her?' For, Lady Theodosia, I had for time long given up all effort to please, still, still finding it ineffectual; and when you cease the attempt, I believe for certainly you lose the faculty.

"At length, our hour to take walk in the convent-garden came, and I (as custom was for mine) went alone, as I had not ever companion but sorrow; and to make prevention from that, to subdue me quite, I always took with me an alone volume of Tasso, the only of all Mrs. Waldegrave's bequest of treasure left for me, and with this much poor-thumbed consoler I made my sally for the walk, not reading intently as

my custom was, but in great thoughtfulness of how much for my wish it was to speak to my dear own father's countrywoman. I had sauntered my way through one sombre walk, and was just making entrance of another, when (oh! what joy for me!) my eyes did meet Lady Cecilia, her very own self, sitting on a bench, her head for rest upon her hand, and apparently lost very deeply in meditation.

"My heart now beat quite fast its pit, pit, pat, for great fear she would not have condescension to say to me; but I did walk by her, extremely hoping my dress would make belief for my being some kind of domestic, and therefore she might give employment for me, but she did not, nor saw me, so profound was her pensiveness, so I made determination to walk again by her, and so heavily as my possibility could effect it, and I did tremble quite for hope and fear; but when I turned to do this project, it came all like flash from lightning into my mind to be undutiful, and for once in my whole life to act disobedience; for grandmamma, hating so great deal England,

and all its customs, had said for me (in much seriousness) 'I was not ever to say, write, or read English.' With my own dear father, Lady Theodosia, I scarcely ever said in any other language, and my prayers he taught for me in that, but as from four years old I was not suffered conversation or knowledge to have in it, I soon my little store of it nearly lost; for to Mrs. Waldegrave I told of grandmamma's command, so she too would not ask me, or desire for me to disobey her; and all this is why for I speak so badly English; but now the wrong thought for undutifulness came to my mind to make address to Lady Cecilia, in the best possible English I could have recollection for, in much hope to interest her, and though great deal afraid I did say my bad words to her."

"And what did you say? I would give any thing to know," said Lady Theodosia.

"Oh, very much simple and awkward it was."

"No, on my life it was not," exclaimed Lord St. Orville, with glowing cheeks, and all the radiancy of enthusiasm emanating

from his eyes—"It was sweet and elegant, and compassionate, as you are."

"My lord!" said Julia in amazement, "how for you is it possible to know?"

"Why," replied Lady Theodosia, pitying her brother's embarrassment, "do you not think it possible for Lady Storamond to tell him?"

"Certainly," said Julia, "and I do now very well know a great deal Lady Storamond must have talked for me to Lord St. Orville."

"But," said Lord De Lisle, "Alfred, as Lady Storamond was so kindly communicative to you, cannot you oblige Theodosia, by telling her Miss De Clifford's first address to Lady Cecilia?"

"I dare say I—I can," faltered out Lord St. Orville.

"Oh! I dare say you can, and verbatim," replied Lord De Lisle, archly.

"Miss De Clifford addressed her with such sweet, conciliating gracefulness of manner, that you see is wholly impossible for me to describe; and gently, timidly said, with the blush of Heaven's own

innocence and kindness mantling her cheeks—

"'I great deal fear for you, madam, you are not much well. Is there for my wish the happiness to do in possibility any thing to be for you consolation?'"

"Was it so, Julia?" said Lady Theodosia.

"Oh!" she replied, blushing with surprise, and pleasure superadded, "always I do say Lord St. Orville has recollection so much true. It was something like for that I did say, but not so well as his lordship has made it for me."

"But what answer made your paragon?"

"Why, Lady Theodosia, the very moment I did say to her, she raised her eyes, and made fix of them in such gaze for earnest on me, I trembled quite in thought she was offended, for she did colour so all in one minute."

"But what a rude savage to stare at you so, Julia, with her great, ugly, goggle eyes!"

"Dear Lady Theodosia! she had not ugly eyes, nor goggle; for they were sweet and beautiful as Lord—— Delamore's, and—

and your own mother's: and it was natural she should stare at so shabby girl with old book to read in; but though she looked surprised, she promptly answered, Oh! so sweetly it was!

"'Indeed you can make every consolation for me if you will sit by me, and promise to be for my friend, and make all possible stay with me while I remain here.'"

"I could not answer for very joyfulness, but I offered my hand to say all amity for me."

"Which La *Belle Sauvage* refused with disdain."

"Oh, no, she took it instantly in very much kindness, and kissed it too, so she did, like to affectionate sister; and then I sat by her, and she said so much to me, and so sweetly it all was to me who feared she would not have condescension to say at all to me. Indeed so long was time, since kindness was for me, cannot forget it, nor will I;" and tears now trembled in Julia's eyes.

Lord St. Orville started from his seat, flew to the window to look out, yet saw

nothing; then hurried to the door, laid his hand upon the lock, took it off again; then hastened to the fire, stirred that up, declaring at the same time "it was uncommonly warm for Christmas;" then re-seated himself, took up a newspaper, which he folded up into the smallest compass his ingenuity could devise for diminishing it, then as eagerly unfolded it, and with his nail very indefatigably strove to erase the creases he had but a moment before so industriously made.

"Dear Julia, go on with your interesting narrative," said Lady Theodosia.

"Why, Lady Theodosia, after we talked, or rather she did talk, and I in much happiness listened, she asked for my name, and I did say it; and she repeated it with such a tone for interest, it gave to my heart the cheer of gladness; for time was so long it was old in recollection, since one tone of interest had sounded for me. At length the bell tolled for the boarders to go in, when Lady Cecilia drew my hand through her arm, with so much kindness it was, and so new it was for me to meet with kindness

from a fellow creature, it made me weep for much gladness."

"It was indeed most natural, Julia, when you met with kindness from a *fellow* creature in a convent, to weep for gladness," said Lady Theodosia, smiling.

"Indeed it was," replied our heroine, "and so I wept, and Lady Cecilia———"

"Kiss'd off the trickling tears."

"Oh! no, she did only wipe them away, and asked me so tenderly, 'Why for I shed them?' and I said, 'it was for joy to meet the countrywoman to my dear father;' and I might have added, 'in whom I found that *long* stranger, kindness:' but I did not, Lady Theodosia; for I knew it was not right to make my complaint of *those* who had chilled every heart to me. The whole evening the happiness was for me to sit with Lady Cecilia—yes, and at supper too; for she did beg so in earnest of the abadessa to let her sit where I did, that she did let her; so when the hour for retiring came to make separation for us, we were much sorry: and I had grief too for thinking, as

she was charge of great trust she was jammed up in a not wholesome little *celletta*, within the cell for the abadessa, by whom she was locked up there every night."

"A most enviable birth, by mine honour!" exclaimed Lord De Lisle; "what's your opinion, St. Orville?"

But Lord St. Orville made no answer, and was now leaning his elbows on a table, his face completely hid in his hands.

"Why the very thought for it makes poor Lord St. Orville nervous," said Julia, "for he trembles in cold, as I did in apprehension for my dear Cecilia, lest she should be ill taken in the night time, and the abadessa heavy to sleep should not hear her call: but, thank Heaven! she was not ill at all ever while she remained in Santo Sebastiano, and that was great joy for me. Well, Lady Theodosia, when we met the morning after her arrival, it was exceedingly great gladness for us both, and from that time we made not separation, when it was for possibility to avoid it; and we became at last so very stedfastly friends,

that she did say for me, 'I was dearer to her heart than any other woman in existence,' and I was much glad to hear that; and when joy did give me power to say it, I told her, 'I did love her better than all the world,' for I had no lover, you know, to make exception for."

"And she was *much glad* when you told her that, Julia, I dare say."

"Indeed she was; for her eyes made flash of joy's much brilliant rays. So to prove her truth in love for me, she set about the toil to weed from my heart its faults."

"Faults! Julia! no, no, you had not a fault, by Heaven!" exclaimed Lord St. Orville, with energy, though trembling in powerful agitation.

"By *Heaven's* fervour, I had correction of great many, Lord St. Orville," Julia gravely replied, "for weeds will make growth in the soil for neglect. Cecilia lured from me faults great deal, and gave for me true proofs from friendship. Oh! for surely was she like the tender elder sister, in performance of the part for mother to

a young *sorella*. Sweet is instruction from affection, and much in magic it makes steal of its lore into the responsive mind, where memory awakened quite by its impressive touch, nurtures the genial blossoms into the good fruit and flowers for knowledge.

"The library to Santo Sebastiano was much valuable, and Cecilia, as the child to affluence, had access quite free to it. While I, the child to—to—to inattention, was excluded, and left to vegetate with all ignorance; but my own amiable and much highly-cultivated friend, brought in the short period (oh! it was short!) she was spared to me, every volume thence she had thought could make improvement for me. Oh! she toiled so indefatigably for my good, that I no more should want aid to make stronger the small sprouts of knowledge dear Mrs. Waldegrave had implanted in my mind. She read and explained so beautifully; her own language, I had thought, still, still more eloquent, more graceful, and very certainly for me more fascinating, than what the authors of celebration themselves did say."

"And she taught you chess too, and I doubt not many beautiful fancy works?" said Lady Theodosia.

"Oh! no, she had not comprehension of work; knew nothing of any needles, but the mariner's or Cleopatra's. Oh! no, from her education among great many boys, she could not even thread a needle; so that as she had no maid with her she was often distressed very much; for not having custom to dress without assistance from the *femme de chambre*, she did perpetually break or tear off the tapes and bobbin to her petticoats and tuckers, and exceedingly maltreat her clothes; and then in her little awkward distresses she would come for me to make repair of those accidents, and it was sweet pleasure for me to be of use to her.

"But this time of great happiness was doomed for me to be like one day of sunshine, succeeded by the dreary winter's cheerless gloom. A messenger one day came from the English consul; the intelligence he brought made great consternation for the *abadessa* and the elder nuns,

I did afterwards hear. The fathers of the convent were summoned, and my Cecilia, my own, my only friend, in soon time called before them, called from me for whom she was reading, and—and—I not ever saw her more. She was hurried away without permission for seeing me. I was told all this suddenly—unfeelingly: the direful blow proved too much for my dismayed senses; they fled on the instant subdued, and I did fall to the ground in very long and obstinate swoon, but there was no one left me to care for that."

This intelligence seemed to prove too much for Lord St. Orville also, who started from his seat in agitation too powerful for concealment, and rushed out of the room, and Lord De Lisle rapidly followed him.

CHAPTER IX.

Julia's tears were beginning to flow at the recollection of this separation from her beloved friend, when the sudden retreat of Lord St. Orville arrested them. "Oh! Heaven!" she exclaimed, "your dear brother is ill very much. I know it by his pale countenance, and the agitation of his frame. Lady Theodosia, you—*you* may go to him, and do your possible to relieve his malady."

"Never mind him. De Lisle is with him," Lady Theodosia replied, with affected carelessness.

"Never mind him!—Me! me not mind for Lord St. Orville!—Oh! Lady Theodosia! if your finger only made pain for you, it would be grief for your brother's heart so tender in sympathy; and you say not to mind him when he is a great deal ill," said Julia, reproachfully, and with infinite emotion.

"Oh! how I love you for these reproaches," replied Lady Theodosia, throwing her arms around Julia's neck, and affectionately kissing her—"oh! how it delights me to see such interest awakened in your bosom for Alfred. But again, I say, mind him not at present; you know De Lisle is with him, the kindest friend that the heart of sympathy ever animated; nor could I be the smallest use in Alfred's present malady, which the anecdotes you have related have solely caused."

Julia turned pale as death, and the agonizing throb of her heart pervaded her whole frame with trembling agitation—"Alas! then," she falteringly articulated, "my first idea was the just one, and Lord St. Orville *does love* Lady Storamond."

"No, sweet Julia, my heart's long-elected sister, St. Orville *does not love* Lady Storamond," said Lady Theodosia; "but come, lie still in my arms so, with your head on my bosom, and fancy yourself my *enfant*, whom I am about to lull to sleep with a pretty story. Come, there's a kiss for my

precious; and do n't be frightened, though I shall tell you wonderous things—

"'Once upon a time there lived a beautiful lady, named Cecilia, who loved from her earliest days a handsome and accomplished youth, the gallant Earl of Storamond: the fair damsel's sire smiled in propitious kindness upon their love, but ruthless destiny cut the thread of this good man's days, and he was gathered to his fathers.' So far I can repeat from book, but the sequel I must proceed with in my own words, as well as I am able.

"I dare say, Julia, you know better than I do the particulars of Lady Cecilia's story, who after the death of her father, (the late Lord Varland) his brother, who succeeded him in the title, instantly interdicted the addresses of Lord Storamond to Lady Cecilia, whom he meant to unite to his own eldest son, for the purpose of retaining her large property, still, as an appendage to the title; and to effect more securely his cruel and dishonourable purpose, he suddenly carried off his niece to Sicily, hoping that as Lord Storamond was a student at Cam-

bridge, he should unite his niece and son before the favoured lover could quit for any efficient length of time his collegiate duties. All this you must have heard, and probably remember; but you know not that St. Orville was one of those early geniuses that ripen prematurely; so that he became a student at Cambridge at an uncommonly early age, and quitted it at that period of life, when the generality of young men commence their studies there.

"At college, Alfred formed a friendship for Lord Storamond, who is about four years older than my brother. Having at length completed their collegiate studies, they finally quitted Cambridge at the same period, and together set out for Sicily, Alfred going to spend some months with my uncle Ashgrove, who was then (with a large squadron under his command) cruizing in the Mediterranean; Lord Storamond's business in Sicily to carry off his beloved Cecilia, in which attempt Alfred promised to assist him with all his own powers and influence over Lord Ashgrove. Upon their arrival at Pamerlo, Alfred

learned, to his infinite disappointment, that his uncle was off Corsica; and in letters from this dear parent, (which awaited my brother's arrival) he advised St. Orville to remain at Palermo until his return.

"The two friends also learned upon their arrival at Palermo, 'that all Lord Varland's sons were gone upon an excursion to Messina, while his lordship himself was laid up with a severe attack of the gout in his villa near Palermo.' This was an opportunity, too propitious for Lord Storamond to be lost, in waiting for a convoy, or any other assistance Lord Ashgrove could have afforded him.

"Lord Storamond found means to apprize Lady Cecilia of his being at Palermo, and of his project to effect her elopement with him, to which she most readily and joyfully assented. His lordship now hired as swift a sailing vessel as he could procure to take them to Corsica, whither Alfred was to accompany them, and from Corsica the fugitives were to proceed according to the advice of my uncle.

"Could the escape of Lady Cecilia be

effected from Lord Varland's villa to the ship, without discovery, there was little apprehension to be entertained afterward of a pursuit; but in such a constant state of alarm was Lord Varland, lest his niece should elope, that he had her encompassed with spies. After much deliberation, it was therefore determined 'that Lady Cecilia and her woman were to elope in men's attire, and that Alfred should assume a dress similar to that which Lady Cecilia most usually appeared in; and should they be pursued, for him to give himself up as Lady Cecilia;' for as the elopement, and consequently any pursuit to be dreaded, must take place in the night, the discovery of the deception was not likely to be made until the fugitives had embarked, and were under weigh.

"From the uncommon clearness of Alfred's complexion, and the brilliancy of his bloom, which his maritime excursions have since considerably faded and spoiled; and indeed I may say, from his extreme beauty altogether, when a boy, he several times performed women's characters in his school

theatricals; and often, when a youth, he has assumed women's clothes, to make sport for us at Christmas, always sustaining the character of a hoiden, so inimitably, that he has deceived numbers of people for a whole evening; so that he was by no means a novice in the character he was to undertake. Lady Cecilia too was a good deal of a lively romp, is uncommonly tall, and has in speaking a husky sort of voice, as Alfred's then was; so that when in high spirits, and full of arch whim, he had no apprehension of not sustaining the part of Lady Cecilia for a short period, so as to deceive those sent in pursuit of the fugitives.

"At length, the night of the elopement arrived, and Lady Cecilia effected her escape; but was scarcely gone when missed, and was pursued so promptly, that it was fortunate for the lovers the disguise of Alfred, who, as the supposed Lady Cecilia, was surrounded and seized, then mounted on a mule, and instead of being conveyed, as he fully expected, into the presence of Lord Varland, was conducted about a league up the country, and, to his utter dismay,

forced into the convent of Santo Sebastiano; as on the preceding day Lord Varland had received intelligence of Lord Storamond being at Palermo; so that, in high alarm, he had instantly made arrangements with the superior of Santo Sebastiano, for his niece to be sent thither the following morning, and ———"

Lady Theodosia, in the last few moments, feeling the head of Julia becoming a weight upon her bosom, now earnestly looked at her, and beheld her eyes closed, and her lovely countenance clad in the pale semblance of everlasting sleep. Instantly, Lady Theodosia uttered a piercing shriek, which drew from the anti-chamber Lords St. Orville and De Lisle.

Almost franticly, Lord St. Orville flew to our heroine, and in dismayed tenderness took the support of her from his trembling sister into his own arms. Lady Theodosia, now released from her lovely, though senseless burden, threw herself upon the neck of her cousin, exclaiming—

"Oh! Henry, take me, take me hence, nor let me again know the anguish of

seeing the death-clad remains of a being I love."

Lord De Lisle spoke every consolation to her, in positive assurances that Julia had only fainted; and now convinced by him, she flew to assist her almost distracted brother in the restoration of our heroine, while Lord De Lisle, well conceiving the presence of any domestic now would be ill-timed; and knowing from his tender care of Lady Theodosia, during those little indispositions her sorrow often threw her into, where to find hartshorn, and other restoratives, hastened to procure them, when their united efforts for the recovery of Julia had the desired effect, who evinced symptoms of returning respiration, and soon after heaving the most deep-drawn sighs, she unclosed her eyes, but in them appeared such vacuity, that Lord St. Orville, in alarm, that almost suspended every faculty, exclaimed—

"Oh! merciful Heaven! what means this dreadful vacuity in the eyes of my beloved? Oh! Theodosia! De Lisle! what—what can it mean?"

The sound of his voice seemed at once

to recall something of her recollection; she started a little forward, laid her hand upon his shoulder, and looked in his face with such a touchingly wistful gaze, such an expression of horror and melancholy blended, she agonized his very soul.

"Oh!" she murmured in an alarming kind of audible, plaintive whisper; "oh! had I married *him*, you would then have been unhappy, and I should have felt it, felt *all* your great sorrows as anguish very great, in terrible, to my deservedly broken heart."

"St. Orville, you must leave her," exclaimed Lady Theodosia, in excessive terror; "your presence is too much for her to bear at present."

"No, oh, no! not go, St. Orville," said Julia mournfully, "leave not me, I conjure for you. No, never at all leave me, for I should then, perhaps, get into much direful mischief. Oh! he did put on your look; for that he had thought would lead me, and it did. Oh! it was to verge of very terrible precipice. Lady Delamore did say 'it was a dreadful precipice,' and it was.

Oh! had I, had I precipitated myself down it, I had been in the vale for misery, and what would have become of you?"

The tone of Julia's voice sounded in such melting pathos in her last sentence, it quite subdued her lover. Tears sprung from his swelling heart to his eyes, and rolled rapidly down his cheeks; a tear fell upon Julia's hand; it startled her. Eagerly she raised her eyes to his face, and her heart promptly feeling that he wept, sent its responsive drops of sympathy to flow in torrents from her eyes, removing at once that alarming wildness in her looks and manner, which the powerful effect of contending emotions upon her susceptible feelings had occasioned. Lord De Lisle now poured out some hartshorn and water for Lady Theodosia.

"Take this," he said, "dear Theodosia, and then come, walk with me; you have not yet been out to-day."

Lady Theodosia instantly did what her amiable and considerate cousin desired her. She drank the restorative, and accompanied him upon a walk.

Julia's head had sunk upon the shoulder of Lord St. Orville, where she had hid her face while she wept without controul; for well he knew how efficacious tears would prove, and would not aim at restraining them. At first she wept almost convulsively, but by degrees her tears tranquillized into the gentle drops of pleased emotion, and at length his lordship gently and lowly articulated—

"Miss De Clifford, my sister has told you, I believe, whom you honoured by your early friendship."

"Yes, she did give for me that very much, yet joyful amazement," replied Julia, too much agitated to attend exactly to the import of her answer.

"Joyful!" exclaimed Lord St. Orville, in a transport of rapture that almost overpowered his reason, "is it then joy to you, my Julia, my long ardently adored Julia? Oh! speak to me, and say 'it is indeed joy to you.'"

"Why I did say," replied Julia, tremulously, and striving to conceal still more her blushing face from him, who seemed to

attempt to obtain a view of it, but almost instantly he gave up the effort.

"Fear not, beloved Julia," he said, "that I will ever seek the gratification of any wish of mine to distress you. I would give worlds, at this moment, to see your eloquent countenance, to read my doom in certainty there; but it would pain you, and I will await your time to relieve my torturing anxiety."

"Indeed," replied Julia, "for certainty it would be much pain for me to let any one to see me now; but—but when I get great courage to look up, my long time, supposed Cecilia, cannot expect to see in Julia's face any thing but what will spring from wish to make for her friend, most—comfort."

Lord St. Orville pressed the hand he held of Julia's, with eager, tender gratitude, to his lips, and for a few moments his feelings were too powerful to admit of utterance; at length, he falteringly said—

"Oh! how I have longed for, yet dreaded the moment of this explanation; for still,

still has my heart trembled in terror, lest you should not continue to St. Orville that prized affection you felt for Lady Storamond."

"Oh! Lord St. Orville! was for you that fear? Little then you know, that affection," Julia replied, with fascinating *naiveté*, "but, indeed, I was like to you myself; for I had great fear Lady Storamond would not so well love me, as Lady Cecilia Hume did; but much happily we have both mistaken been, for we have same love as ever." It now all at once darted into Julia's mind, that the happiness she felt had led her into disclosing too ingenuously the secret of her heart, and with cheeks, glowing with burning blushes, she started from Lord St. Orville's supporting arms, with an intention to fly from the room; but her recent indisposition still enervated her, and Lord St. Orville, aware of her design, gently arrested her, and made her his trembling prisoner, whilst he entered upon a full confession of his long ardent love for her: love that now glowed under

the auspices of his parents, and her guardian Lord Ashgrove, long the confident of his unalienable passion for her.

"It is impossible for me to describe my chagrin and alarm," said Lord St. Orville, after learning from Julia where his sister's narrative had been suspended, "when I found the numerous emissaries of Lord Varland, who had pursued us, and secured me (under a belief of my being the fugitive, Cecilia) were conducting me a lonely road far remote from the villa of Lord Varland. I did not dare to expostulate, or make the vain attempt of resistance, lest a discovery of myself should prove destructive to the happiness of my friend; but trivial was every foregoing sensation of inquietude compared to those I experienced, when I found myself lodged in a monastery, there to be confined as a transgressing female. Even then I considered it hazardous for my friend yet to announce myself; and I suffered the emissaries of Lord Varland to depart without discovering the stratagem we had devised to elude their malice, and when their departure had actually taken place, I

felt in fullest force the unpleasantness of the situation I had fallen into.

"Alone, and friendless in the convent, I trembled at ecclesiastic vengeance, should I discover myself; and to sustain the character I had so unwarily assumed for more than a day, I believed to be an impossibility. To be immediately released I had no expectation of. Storamond, I knew, would hasten to embark, concluding that I was conducted to Lord Varland, whom I had only to challenge to *single combat*, to make tremble, and yield me at once my liberty. From Storamond, therefore, I could cherish no hope of assistance, and on Leslie rested my sole dependence; for it had been arranged, that if I should be taken by the pursuers of the fugitive, Leslie was not to embark for Corsica, but to return to Palermo, and await my coming; consequently when I did not appear, I doubted not that he would feel every alarm for my safety, and hasten to apprize the British consul of his apprehensions, whose friendship for Lord Ashgrove I believed would stimulate to use every exertion to effect a discovery of

where I was confined, and procure my enlargement.

"Very wretched indeed were the first few hours I passed in the convent of Santo Sebastiano. Full of trembling apprehension at monastic vengeance, and in all the agitated alarm of perfect conviction that I should soon betray myself, I obeyed the summons to dinner; my appetite chased by terror, I beheld no viands, and the table to me seemed only covered with inquisitorial implements of vengeance.

"But, Julia, how in one moment did love change the scene, and gild every prospect around me with its fascinating tints, and by its enchantment restored at once my fleeting courage, and gifted me with powers to deceive even all around me! Oh! Julia, you broke upon my enraptured vision like some celestial being come on the mission of pity, to save me from despondence! I heard your bewitching voice; I beheld your heavenly face; the grace and sweetness of your words and manner; and all struck to my palpitating heart with resistless magic,

and from that moment my only terror was, the apprehension of being compelled to leave you. Instructed now by love, I each hour became more perfect in the mimic art, and sustained more naturally the character my guardian spirit surely inspired me with the idea to assume; for by it I was led to you, my Julia, my—(may I not speak it love?) my destined *wife*.

"Oh! Julia, how sweet and resistless was the beautiful *naiveté* of your bewitching manner! how fascinatingly in the truth of genuine goodness you twined yourself into every folding of my heart, until you found its centre, where the shrine of pure, venerating, honourable love, enclosed your image. I was then at an age to fall romantically in love; you taught my heart to know there was an affection more tender then filial love; you first, through Fancy's magic, captivated my senses, but reason, by studying your perfections, banished the romance of boyish passion from my heart, and lit up at once the pure, undeviating flame of everlasting love.

"Oh! Julia, how I studied your heart, and what a perfect work I found it! Spotless in innocence was every folding of it, and treasured there was every virtue. Julia, ask me the incidents, the conversations, the employments, which marked each succeeding moment I spent with you, and you will find my memory faithful in recounting them. It was the fifteenth day after my arrival at Santo Sebastiano, that my lovely friend told me 'she loved me better than any other friend in existence;' and although I knew yours was only the attachment of high-wrought friendship, your artless avowal spoke such raptures to my heart, presaging the future change from friendship in you to a more tender feeling, that very nearly I had betrayed myself; and Julia, how sweet was the moment in which you gave to me the treasure of your lock of hair enclosed within that precious locket, on which your own hand engraved that name, which on my heart was stamped for ever! Oh! Julia! sweet are the remembrances of those happy hours when seated

by each other we perused the same page together; or when your seraphic strains you warbled into my fascinated ears, and I entranced did listen to you———"

"They are much sweet remembrances, but at present spare them, I do beseech for you, my friend, since in very truth, after my little indisposition, I do feel they too great deal affect me," said Julia, falteringly interrupting him; for his voice, as he spoke, was melting to such touching tenderness, she feared its influence might lure her into more fully betraying her sympathy, than propriety sanctioned; and anxious to turn the conversation to something less affecting, she added, "but do tell for me how you did procure some necessary clothes; for coming as you did, you could not have preparation made for so long stay?"

"Lord Varland, still believing he had confined his niece in Santo Sebastiano, sent me a large supply, many things among them puzzling me most terribly to find out their use, and how to arrange them on me;

and in my rough treatment of them I was often indebted to your kindness for redress; and, beloved friend, sweet was the delight it ever proved to me, my application to you for assistance upon those perplexing occasions. I then could, in the delightful visions of fancy's creation, believe you the partner of my bosom, to whom I had flown for advice and consolation in the rubs of life; and in some of those happy moments, when with fond rapture I have hung over you, repairing my tattered garments, I had certainly announced myself to you, on whose secrecy I knew I might rest every dependence, only well had I developed that bewitching charm in your disposition, which would teach you to feel pain at the discovery, and by leading you into the retiring conduct of reserve, deprive me of that happiness I experienced in your innocent, unsuspecting confidence.

"But, my lovely friend, you wish me not to dwell at present upon those scenes of tender, fond remembrance, and your wishes are my guides. Julia, I had no pre-

sentiment when I was summoned from you, that we were about to be separated for such an agonizingly painful lapse of time. Oh! if I had, force only could have torn me from you;—and the anguish I endured——"

"Oh! spare for me the pain of hearing," said Julia, tenderly, and with sweet, resistless artlessness; "I cannot at all bear to hear you had much pain of anguish. Oh! it makes for me, trembling much in heart and frame, to think of that day, in very fear, lest so terrible time should come again to part us, and make us great deal wretched."

This unconscious confession came with such genuine force from her heart, it thrilled the sweetest sounds of joy and hope through every chord and tone of Lord St. Orville's agitated bosom, and drew such an effusion of tenderness from thence, that Julia, now learning the import of what her ingenuousness had unwarily expressed, her confusion silenced instantly the adoration of her lover, who, led by the truth of love, recoiled from the idea of inflicting even the

smallest sensation of uneasiness in her gentle bosom, and now with one great effort to silence the ebullitions of his joy-dilated heart, he turned at once to his narrative, and proceeded.

CHAPTER X.

"By the intervention of my destiny, Leslie was among those appointed to wait upon the beach, until our arrival with the fugitive; but whilst waiting there, he recollected his having omitted the delivery of a letter I had given him a particular charge about to Signior *Oro*, my uncle's banker; and believing he should have full time to do it before we could be ready for embarkation, hasted back to Palermo to give the letter in care to the man where we had lodged, whom he doubted not he should find still up: however poor Leslie was mistaken in all his expectations; our *ci-devant* landlord was gone to bed, and the delay he consequently experienced in arousing him, prevented his being able to reach the beach, until the fugitives had been some time under weigh; nor could he at that hour in the morning procure any boat

to attempt following the sloop in. Poor Leslie, knowing nothing of the pursuit, or my arrest, now returned to my late lodgings, in great distress, at the inconvenience I must suffer from being thus deprived of his services.

"The fugitives had a remarkably expeditious voyage to Corsica, where Storamond introduced himself to my uncle, who gave him convoy for England, and every kind assistance. The moment the lovers landed at Falmouth they proceeded to Scotland, and, more fortunate than my beloved sister, they were united. Shortly after, Storamond's health obliged him to go abroad, where, with his Cecilia, he has remained ever since, until this present period, and now they are returned: so near is their seat to Black Tower abbey, and so intimately acquainted has Lady Frances ever been with all Lord Storamond's family, that here you could not remain another week, without the absolute certainty of seeing the real Lady Storamond; which cause, my beloved friend, I trust will plead in excuse for me, if I have been premature in a dis-

covery, which appeared to me as an impossibility longer to delay.

"Lord Ashgrove, for some political causes, was obliged to touch at several ports before he stood for Sicily, which caused a delay of three weeks after the time he originally purposed being at Palermo. On his arrival there, he expected to find me all impatience to embrace him: and he was fully prepared to rally me upon my pleasant adventure in female attire; but terrible was the dismay of my dear uncle and poor Leslie, when they met, and that neither could give any account of me to the other.

"In consternation and alarm not to be portrayed, my dear affectionate uncle flew to Lord Varland, to demand me. That demand was a discovery of the stratagem adopted to deceive him; that discovery awakened vengeance in his heart, and vengeance taught him dissimulation. He said, 'he was astonished and distressed at my uncle's intelligence.' So far he deviated not from truth, we can readily conceive; but he added, 'that believing the person retaken to be his niece, he had sent that

person under safe convoy to England.' What he purposed to effect, by this deception, we never discovered; but Lord Ashgrove, suspecting his sincerity, made immediate inquiry amongst the maritime people, and learned to a certainty that no vessel had gone from Sicily at the time mentioned by Lord Varland as the moment of my departure. Instantly upon this information, Lord Ashgrove returned to Lord Varland with a brace of pistols, abruptly entered his lordship's apartments, the door of which he fastened.

"'There,' he exclaimed to this notorious coward, 'take that pistol; here is a sufficient store of ammunition. As malady deprives you of the power of standing, we will fight sitting. This small table shall be the only barrier between us, and here we fire alternately, until one of us falls; unless you instantly disclose to me the place of St. Orville's confinement, in which make no attempt to deceive me; for if I find him not, I will pursue you along the surface of the globe, nor cease my pursuit, until one of us dies by the hand of the other.'"

"Oh! my benefactor! my dear, kind, fostering father!" exclaimed Julia, pale with horror, "Oh! tell me, did the bad man make aim at my own benefactor's life?"

"No, my sweet, susceptible friend; the trembling coward instantly confessed his breach of truth, by announcing the place of my concealment. My dear, indefatigable uncle, rapid in every movement that leads to the exercise of benevolence, promptly applied to the British consul; every measure was instantly taken, and a proper order obtained for my being immediately delivered up to those who demanded me.

"Julia, you have expressed your wish for my silence, upon the anguish I endured upon my separation from you. I wrote to you three times, my life, as your friend Cecilia, before I quitted Palermo, and obtained only one answer from you; but that sweet letter has been a precious balm to all my woes. From the moment I received it, it has been laid by me constantly upon my pillow, every night to be kissed, ere I sunk to sleep, and to be read the moment my eyes unclosed at morning's dawn."

"I much faithfully answered every letter I received of you," replied Julia, in great emotion—"It had been for wicked ingratitude had I not, they were so sweet in kindness; and sure, I had the great purpose to say my thanks, for all the beautiful remembrances, and the treasure so valuable of books you sent me; and how could I not to write, when all that was in my heart?—but—but grandmamma did return in soon time after the arrival was of your loved presents; and—and—" Julia blushed, ceased, and looked embarrassed.

"And you think she intercepted your letters, Julia?"

"I great deal fear she did; because, when she arrived, I was two letters in arrear for you; had made answer for one, and was about the other; so I told to her all, and showed her every thing, even my two letters, before I sent them; not that I did at all suppose it would be pleasure, for her to know I had made a friend, but it was my duty to tell her, and so I did. She was then exceedingly serious in anger with me, but did not then deprive from me

my treasures, but soon storm, very terrible, did come, her anger made wreck of all; yes, all, but the toothpick-case she took from me, and that she quite forgot. She said, not more must I hold correspondence with my Cecilia; took from me your loved letters, and then, indeed, my wreck of happiness was total;" and tears now streamed down Julia's cheeks, drawn forth by the recollection of that time of sorrow, while Lord St. Orville tenderly wiped those tears away, whilst his own with difficulty he repressed from falling in sympathy; and as sorrow thrilled through his heart, to think how cruelty had tortured her, joy followed with its balmy whispers, 'that affection for him had been the source of Julia's grief.'

"Oh! I know," he tenderly said, "she deprived you of all those things, even the books which I had fondly conceived would have beguiled for you many tedious hours in your melancholy abode; would still have yielded improvement to your knowledge-seeking mind, and kept in existence your recollection of me, for she sent all back to me, accompanied by such a letter from her-

self, that very certainly I did not merit. The moment I learned that Mrs. St. Clair was arrived at Santo Sebastiano, I wrote to her, informing her of every circumstance which occasioned my entrance into that convent, in a fictitious character; announced my real name; my ardent and honourable love for you; and only intreated permission once to see you, and in her presence, ere I sailed with my uncle for the Archipelago.

"To this letter I received a most unpropitious reply, forbidding my ever more addressing any letter to you; and announcing to me that I should never see you more. This latter decree I conceived to be the effect of temporary displeasure, awakened by the sisterhood of Santo Sebastiano, for my having profaned their hallowed sanctuary, by my residence in it, and that time would soften her into pity for me. But terribly I found I had deceived myself. On my return from a short cruize up the Archipelago, at my earnest solicitations, we touched again at Palermo, where, to my infinite joy, I found De Lisle, the frigate

which he commanded being stationed off that coast. Soon he became the confident of my ardent love. Again I wrote to Mrs. St. Clair, and De Lisle was the bearer of my letter to Santo Sebastiano; but soon he returned, not only with my own letter, but with the dreadful intelligence, that you and Mrs. St. Clair were gone from thence, nor could the porteress tell him whither. I now consulted with De Lisle what measure was most eligible to pursue, and, at length, we proceeded together to Santo Sebastiano, where I laid a hundred pistoles before the abadessa, as a peace-offering, which she received most graciously; saying, 'she would appropriate it to having a mass said, to implore forgiveness of my monstrous enormity;' but great and terrible was my disappointment, when I found that from her I could gain no intelligence whatever of whither Mrs. St. Clair was gone. From her I learned the address of Mrs. St. Clair's banker at Palermo; to him I instantly applied, but either he could not, or would not, give me any clue to find you.

"Dreadful was the mental anguish I now

suffered, Julia, at being thus bereft of you. I fell ill, and so dangerously, of a fever brought on by terrible agitation, that for a fortnight no hope whatever was entertained of my recovery. In the delirium of the disease, my incessant ravings about you imparted to my afflicted uncle the cause of my illness; and De Lisle, now closely questioned by him, (and in hopes Lord Ashgrove could trace you out, though we had failed in the attempt) revealed to him the history of my love and direful disappointment. My dear uncle, now anxious to save my life by any means, did all that wealth, great interest, and indefatigable zeal could do, to discover whither you were gone, but without effect:—but, Julia! Julia! my life! why why do you weep so piteously?"

"Always I have been doomed," she replied, sobbing, "to give for you much terrible pain and illness."

Lord St. Orville now, by the most tender soothings, strove to calm her agitated grief; and when he had in some degree succeeded, he continued his narrative.

"I will not, beloved friend, speak of my

illness, or my sufferings, since they so afflict you. From that illness I recovered, when my dear uncle informed me, 'that he was a participator in my bosom's secret; that every thing in his power he would do to promote my happiness; and that the object of my love was child to the dearest friend he had ever had.' At length we left Palermo for Naples, and after making every inquiry for you there, I embarked in an American trading vessel bound for Leghorn; and as a nephew to the American captain, I was to be introduced there, that as an humble trader I might attract no observers, and with better chance of success therefore pursue my anxious search for you; for it was now my only consolation, the idea of exploring Tuscany, where, if I was doomed to encounter cruel disappointment, still I yet should have the gratification of visiting the place of my Julia's birth.

"The American captain proved a most useful and zealous auxiliary; but you know, my Julia, how vain were my researches. I became the purchaser of the *Capanna Violetta*; but not now, sweet friend, will I

pourtray for you my feelings, upon wandering over this place so dear to you. So well had you described every spot, that I traced out every thing but the dear inhabitants, the beloved and interesting father and child; yet I lingered in every spot, still hoping you yet would come, still believing I heard your light footstep in every sound, or heard your dulcet voice in every passing breeze. Oh! Julia, again did the willow overshadow a mourner; again, on the urn of Lady Adelaide, fell the anguished tears of a heart-rived lover.

"At length, Julia, I quitted Tuscany, joined my uncle, and at last returned to England, where I still, still eagerly searched for you, and where the visible alteration which had taken place in my before cheerful flow of spirits struck every one, and every one attributed it to the unkindness of my father; for every one was so unjust to him, as to believe *that* much greater than it had ever in reality been. And thus, my friend, passed one year after my dreadful separation from you. The next year and a half dragged tediously and miserably

on, each succeeding moment finding my love taking deeper and still deeper root, and my misery, at being bereft of you, painfully augmenting.

"At last, Julia, the dreadful moment arrived, in which I had the anguish so highly to offend my father, and to be exiled from his presence. To my kind, sympathising uncle, I now resolved to fly. I was then of age, and having many things to arrange before I bade England (as I feared) a long adieu, I was obliged to visit London before my departure; and the day on which I was to set out for Portsmouth, to sail with Captain Alworth, who was going out to rejoin Lord Ashgrove's fleet on that day, for ever blessed in my remembrance, I—I discovered, I mean, I obtained intelligence of you."

"Oh!" exclaimed Julia, taking his hand, and pressing it to her lips, led by the sudden impulse of enthusiastic gratitude, "concealment for you is use no longer. I do know all, my friend. You are the stranger, my dear, dear benefactor, my secret protector!—Oh! Lord St. Orville, for time

some, my heart has had this sweet knowledge, and to you I owe all my happiness."

Lord St. Orville, finding he was discovered, with many blushes acknowledged that it was so; and Julia, with as many more, found that gratitude to her young protector was not to be expressed by artlessness, without betraying that love had crept into her heart with that potent influence; and trembling, lest she should in her further expressions of gratitude unwarily discover that the prediction of Lady Delamore was just, of her being 'soon more in love than ever;' she earnestly requested his lordship to proceed with his interesting narrative.

The now enraptured Lord St. Orville, though almost subdued by joy at having every trembling fear removed, by the undisguised unfoldings of tender affection, her artlessness had unintentionally led her into, hastened to obey her.

"With difficulty, my Julia," he said, "I effected the concealment of my wild emotions from the amiable young Goodwins;

but when I arrived at Delamore-house, I gave them free indulgence; but when the tumult of my almost frantic joy, at finding the adored of my heart, and finding her unmarried, had a little subsided; and that my agitated mind, melting in tender pity for your afflictions, had power to reflect upon your distressing situation, my ardent heart, agonized by sympathy, led me to the determination of giving up my intention of going with Alworth, and to resolve upon remaining in England, to be your protector—your comforter—your husband, if you would accept of me; but upon a little more rational deliberation, well remembering the invincible rectitude of my beloved, I feared you would not become my wife, without the approbation of my father, which at that period I could not flatter myself with a hope of obtaining; and recoiled from the idea of further offending him, in the moment he had cast me off for ever.

"The most delicate way for my proceeding in assisting you, and that I knew which would prove most consonant to your feel-

ings, would be to obtain for you the protection of Lord Ashgrove, your father's friend, under whose auspices I fondly hoped in time to prevail upon my adored Julia to bless me with her hand. But under whose safe protection could I then leave you, whilst I hastened to my uncle, to inform him of the insulated situation of his beloved De Clifford's child? for though, from my observations at Santo Sebastiano, I believed your finances were far from affluent, yet from my uncle's knowledge of your father's circumstances, we had not the most remote idea they could have been so little prosperous. In this my painful perplexity, Fitzroy unfortunately arrived, to say farewell to me. He had ever evinced the most sincere attachment to me, and the deepest interest in all of my concerns which I had ever confided to him; but until this ill-omened hour, your name had never escaped my lips to him. He saw how powerfully I was agitated, and kindly enquired the cause, when, with his fascinating rhetoric, he drew from me the secret which oppressed my heart.

"Strenuously he now advised me not to postpone my voyage to the Mediterranean, but to hasten thither, and give the protection of you to our excellent uncle, and volunteered to be my agent here, an invisible protector of my treasure, until Lord Ashgrove took you to his care. Well I knew the libertine propensities of Fitzroy, and that no woman dare to confide in him; but to men he was uniformly considered honourable and just in every transaction. In the ebullitions of his kindness, he even then repeatedly called me the friend and brother of his heart. You, I acknowledged, were the essence of my existence; and could I suppose he would betray the trust he had voluntarily taken upon himself, to plunge the poisoned dagger in my heart, while smiling on me? Oh! no——

"The decree of our mutual counsel was, 'that Horatio was not to present himself to Mr. Goodwin, but as a method most congenial to the delicacy of your situation, to cause wealth to pour in upon the Goodwins, to enable them still to protect you;' which from what had come to my know-

ledge of their unparalleled kindness to you, I felt a full conviction they would most conscientiously do.

"I had been so fortunate as to extricate at Constantinople, from a situation of infinite peril, an amiable youth, the only son to one of the East India directors. The father's gratitude was unbounded; and I well knew it would be a source of the highest gratification to him, to afford him an opportunity of obliging me. I instantly therefore dispatched a letter to him, in behalf of Charles Goodwin, who was become inexpressibly dear to my heart, because he evinced so much feeling for you.

"My motive for not applying to my mother, or Theodosia, to protect my treasure was, because I felt convinced, that if I ever was blest with the hand of my Julia, it must be without the approbation of my father; and I wished not to draw upon them his eternal displeasure, by being in my confidence.

"At length all my plans relative to my heart's-prized treasure were, finally, (as I

believed) adjusted with Horatio; and I quitted London full of the most agonizing solicitude about you; though Fitzroy had given me every consolation, by the most solemn assurances of his watching over you, as an anxious brother; and how he fulfilled those solemn promises!—Oh! Heaven!

"But every mile I took that led me from you, convinced me more and more that I had not half completed my arrangements with Horatio relative to you. From every stage where I stopped to change horses, I dispatched some hasty lines to Fitzroy with some new charge about you; and until we left the channel, every opportunity I sent him letters, relative to something I still wished, and wished to have effected for your comfort; from all of which, surely, he must have been convinced I told him truly, when I acknowledged you were the essence of my existence, while I had nothing to lead me to a doubt of his believing me; for every letter I received from him (and he was punctual in writing to me) was replete with all that could tranquillize my appre-

hensions about your safety and your happiness; all that could lure me into full conviction of his truth and friendship.

"In the gulph of Cadiz, we had a slight engagement with two French frigates, of superior force, one of which we took; but as the masts and rigging of ours were much damaged, Captain Alworth was compelled to put into Gibraltar with his prize, and to refit. I was too impatient to obtain Lord Ashgrove's protection for you, to brook any delay; I therefore immediately embarked in a vessel bound for Messina. We touched at Leghorn, and remained there long enough for my paying a visit of a few hours to my loved cottage; and when I told Pietro that you were in England, and that Mrs. St. Clair was no more, he burst forth into such invectives against her, that now Julia, sweet-suffering, patient, uncomplaining angel, I learned her dire cruelties to you, whilst you remained on the banks of the Arno, after you were bereft of your inestimable father. Oh! Julia! Julia! what agony for me was this intelligence! Oh! how my anguished heart panted for

becoming your legal protector, that you might never, never experience unkindness more.

"I had a remarkably quick passage from Leghorn to Messina, where I readily obtained a conveyance to my uncle, to whom I hastened to impart the joyful intelligence of my having, at length, discovered the idol of my heart's homage; but the hapless situation I had found you in, with Pietro's direful information, were dreadful alloys to my happiness.

"You already, my beloved friend, know the fortunate consequences of these communications to my excellent uncle. You also know of the letter my dear father wrote to recal me, and which met me at Gibraltar, but you know not the letter itself. Such a letter few men could have had the magnanimity to write; few the feeling to conceive. Oh! Julia, my life! it proved to me I had indeed a father.

"With the same dispatches came your letter, my Julia, to Lord Ashgrove. I was with him when he read it; for both, full of impatience to hear from you, it was the

first we looked for. Oh! Julia, your sweet, artless composition, fascinated my uncle. Need I say, love, it fascinated me?

"Full of every hope and joy, I returned to Delamore castle, to be taken, for the first time, to my father's heart; and there to see, after a dreadful separation of three long, long years and a half, my Julia.—Yes, yes, I saw you. The little lovely blossom of promise I had been torn from was burst forth into a flower of such rare perfection, I own I had, with all my fond partiality, little expected to find. Such, such I found you, and found you, my treasure, snatched from me. Oh! Horatio! how you deceived me!"

"He did indeed deceive in much treachery us both," said Julia: "alas! alas! what grief he did make for you!—Oh! too well I remember your every look and tone in that sad time, and the recollection is misery now for me."

Lord St. Orville was sensibly affected by her tender sympathy; and Julia, perceiving how much he was so, promptly asked him,

"Why he had told her Fitzroy was not perfidious, when he had been so greatly so?"

"Because, my Julia, the only comfort that was left for me, was to see you happy. You loved Fitzroy, and it became my anxious effort to spare you the pang of knowing he could deceive."

"And how has time made change!" said Julia, in a tone so touchingly sweet, it thrilled in rapture through her lover's heart. "Now to give happiness for me, you must spare for me the pang to know the man, the bad Fitzroy, and the much credulous Julia, made so wretched, has any grief to pain him. But tell to me, dear friend, did Lord Penmorva say for you, his perfidy, or like true child for dishonour, leave the discovery to be found by you?"

"We will suppose, my Julia, his purpose was to confess his transgressions to me, but I made the direful discovery ere he had time. The night of my arrival I passed some hours in poor Leslie's chamber. During the time of my illness at Palermo, this faithful and attached domestic learned

enough in my delirium, to know 'that I had met with some enchantress, named Julia De Clifford, in the convent of Santo Sebastiano, who had won my tenderest affections;' and upon finding at Delamore castle a fascinating Julia De Clifford, a native of Italy, he naturally formed conclusions; and in full gratitude for my sitting by him, he was eager to evince it in the most pleasing way to me, by sounding your praises as the purest incense to my heart.

"'She is indeed a sweet creature,' said Mrs. Seabright, whom you know is Leslie's relation, and was sitting up with him, 'and so beautiful in mind as well as form, that I grieve to think she has not bestowed her affections upon a man more deserving of them, than he who has been so lucky to win her.'

"Oh! Julia! what I felt at that moment would be as impossible as it would be useless for me to describe. Cruelly as Penmorva has acted towards me, I sincerely hope his direful pangs, on losing you, never, never equalled those, I at that dreadful moment was agonized by.

" 'Mr. Fitzroy is the man I mean,' she continued, 'and knowing his pursuits so well as we all do, I may say he deserves not so sweet a creature as that for a wife.'

"My heart now ceased to wreath in anguish; for I instantly conceived that Fitzroy, upon meeting you at Delamore castle, had (as my friend) naturally treated you with particular attention, which the domestics as naturally construed into the homage of love; for a suspicion of his faith never once found an entrance into my mind, but a quickly obtruding thought distracted me again. Horatio was more resistingly fascinating than any man I had ever seen; and while attentive, solely through friendship to me, might he not, unintentionally, have obtained the treasure of my Julia's affections; but not one moment was I doomed to the torture of doubt; the rack of certainty was given to my heart, by Seabright instantly recounting the intelligence she had obtained from the communicative Mr. Franks, of Fitzroy's meeting you at Z; and all that occurred prior to his unexpectedly finding you at Delamore castle;

where his unsubdued love burst out again, and led him to give up Lady Enderfield to think wholly of you.

"I saw the painful distress of poor Leslie awakened for me; and in pity to his situation I exerted all the fortitude I could press into my service; but the calm on the surface only centered more deeply every pang of misery in my heart. As speedily as I possibly could effect it, without alarming him, I quitted Leslie; and retreated to my chamber, not to rest, you may suppose, for Horatio had annihilated that balm, with every comfort for me. Oh! how slow is time in the mensuration of misery. I thought that day would never more arrive, that I might seek Fitzroy, not to challenge him, Julia; for if he was loved by you, not all the powers that could influence the vindictive hand to vengeance could lead me on to injure him, to wound your heart through his.—Oh! no, no, no, the beloved of my Julia would have found me ever a ready shield to guard her person through his safety. At the dawn of morning, I at length heard a footstep in the gallery; a welcome signal to me, that the

family were rising; and now I determined no longer to delay my visit to Fitzroy's apartments. I opened my door, and found the footsteps were those of him I panted to see.

"With as much calmness as I had power to command, I requested a private conference with him.—Instantly he became as pale as death, and trembled. I wanted now no further confirmation of the heart-rending intelligence I had obtained; but as every culprit ought in justice to obtain a candid hearing, I accompanied him to a lonely part of the ground, where he acknowledged all that my anguished heart was then, in the tortures of trembling anticipation, prepared to hear; but how I survived the confirmation of a doom, by which every hope of happiness was torn from my breast for ever, my bursting heart, day after day, has asked me. I did survive it, Julia; but to sustain it with firmness, my fortitude was unequal.

"Horatio's only excuse was, 'that he had not *seen* you when he had made his rash offers and promises; but having *seen* you, he had proved the impossibility of not loving you; that he adored, as well as myself, and with

him every law was amenable to love.' I felt in fullest force how great was the temptation; and yet I firmly believed I should not have acted as he had done. I have perfect recollection of calling him 'perfidious friend!' which, for your sake, I afterwards made the attempt, by evasions, to lure you into a belief that I had not: and certainly some secret emissary of Selina's overheard me.

"From that dreadful period, most agonizing were the sufferings of my anguished heart; and the concealment of the cause of my misery, from my attentive commiserating parents, most difficult and painful. Still, still, I was my Julia's adoring observer, and with grief unutterable, I saw your straying heart had not found its home. You had no confidence in your lover; and the trembling refinements of your bosom led you to repellent reserve, in every turn of your conduct to him; and you had not the happy ease of contentment in your choice. Your mind was too sublimated in delicacy perfectly to assimilate with Penmorva's, who, though he adored you to idolatry, wanted those congenial feelings that could draw from the

heart of pure affection its reponsive tenderness.

"With the anguished conviction, that you had not chosen happiness for yourself, was added the pang of believing, but for Fitzroy, I might have been blessed by your affection. The tender, unsubdued regard you still expressed for Lady Storamond, were barbed arrows to my heart, in the torturing supposition, that but for the perfidy of a friend I estimated, and confided in, St. Orville might have softened into love the tender, unfading, high-wrought friendship your heart had conceived, and so long cherished for the supposed Lady Storamond."

Julia, no longer able to affect concealment of the powerful sympathy the sufferings of Lord St. Orville had awakened in her bosom, sobbed so violently, that his lordship, in alarm, brought her a glass of water; and now, by his fascinating tenderness, he drew from her a full confession, 'That her tears were caused by grief, for all the affliction she had occasioned him by shame, for having so unwarily loved the base, perfidious, dishonourable Penmorva; and by apprehension, that her benefactor

would hate her for inflicting such anguish upon his beloved nephew, despise her for having loved so unworthily;' but soon the tender eloquence of her lover tranquillized her shame and fears; recalled her self-love, to rouse her conscious rectitude to give her spirits in its best applause, for the glorious sacrifice she had made to principle; and whilst he expressed his ardent gratitude for her soothing sympathy for his long sufferings, he magically led on the guileless Julia, now fascinated by her early friendship for him, as Cecilia, by the potent voice of gratitude; the gentle sway of pity; and the seductive influence of his striking charms, and surpassing excellence, as Lord St. Orville; artlessly to betray the full power he had obtained over her affections; and in defiance of every effort to conceal her heart's secret, which her ingenuous shame for loving so very soon again, inspired; she, ere she separated from the now happy St. Orville, for the necessary purpose of rest, had innocently made the discovery of her having verified the prophecy of Lady Delamore.

CHAPTER XI.

"I ENVY you not, be assured; I envy you not, friend of my heart, and sister of my fond election," said Lady Theodosia, throwing her arms around the neck of our heroine, the moment they were alone in their apartments for the night. "But, may I not say? Happy, happy sister! your guardian angel has been attentive to your happiness, whilst mine has slept unmindful of its charge. You are not compelled to trample on the sacred laws of duty to seek your happiness with the object of your affection. Oh! no, no, parental approbation smiles propitious on your union; and every mutual friend you have, all anxious, most anxious, to attend you to the altar."

Julia was too grateful for the prospect of superlative happiness, now opened for her, not sensibly to feel the difference in her beloved friend's destiny, and her own; and had

too much of the milk of human kindness in her disposition not to be affected by it.

"But I do trust," at length, said Julia, tenderly, "that I shall live to attend you for one, among your approving relations yet, to the altar of Hymen, to make your union with some amiable man, whom we all shall love so well, to wish him for husband to you."

"Never," exclaimed Lady Theodosia, vehemently, "no, never; for there is not a man in existence worthy of being the successor of my sainted Mandeville."

"Ungrateful Theodosia!' said Julia, reproachfully.

"Oh! Julia!" replied Lady Theodosia, blushing, "my own heart had anticipated that reproach.—It is very true he is amiable, most amiable; but I cannot, cannot love again. Time there was when it might have been otherwise; as for many a day (year I may say) my affections stood with the door of them a-jar, peeping through the chasm, looking wistfully at De Lisle, expecting to be called in, and ready to come at one invit-

ing nod;—but still, still he looked glum, and did not chuse their company; so one day, at last I shut the door in a pet; and went about, looking for those who would think my affection worth having; and I found one, so amiable! so attached!—but scarcely, scarcely, had I found him, when he was violently torn from me"—and now in tears of bitter anguish, she painted all the perfections of her murdered lover; feelingly lamented him; and as usual, her lamentations terminated in a high eulogium upon the humanity, and active, kind consoling benevolence of Lord De Lisle, to all the wretched sufferers from the direful calamity.

Morning came, and the hour for the departure of Lords St. Orville and De Lisle too soon arrived; although they had retarded, and still retarded it, until Julia, almost in tears, entreated them to be gone, "lest they should be benighted in the cold and dark."

The anxious tone of her voice, and the unequivocal look of affection with which she made this entreaty, whilst they increased

Lord St. Orville's unwillingness to the sweetest solace to him when parted from her.

The travellers were sensibly missed at Black Tower abbey. They left a gloomy void behind them, which nothing could fill up; the dawning of Lady Theodosia's returning cheerfulness vanished with them; and Julia, pensive and sad, moped about the abbey; and secretly wishing that Lady Theodosia would consent to return to Delamore castle, to behold her parents happy;—to welcome her dear uncle home, and still to be near her cousin De Lisle; the only being who possessed power to lure her from her grief, and inspire her with any degree of cheerfulness; whilst every hour our heroine could devote to solitude she spent in grieving over the long suffering of Lord St. Orville.

Every word, look, and action of Lord St. Orville, from the moment she beheld him at Delamore castle, until she parted from him at Black Tower abbey, passed and repassed in the review of Julia's faithful memory; her heart drew a parallel between the love of Penmorva and St. Orville; from the

dismayed affection recoiled; and mly clung to the being she now ex- gly believed without compeer. "And this being loves me; this exalted being tenderly loves me!" she would then mentally exclaim, when tears of gratitude springing to her eyes, and its purest influence dilating her heart, would lead her in those moments of contemplative solitude to her knees, devoutly to thank Almighty Providence for saving her from becoming the wife of the Marquis of Penmorva, and ordaining for her the blessing of St. Orville's affection.

Mrs. Wynne, to amuse the melancholy of her young companions, now advised and promoted their not confining their morning rambles to the sombre grounds of Black Tower abbey, but to their extending them to the neighbouring towns and villages; and Julia, feeling how uncomfortable Mrs. Wynne must find herself with two such doleful associates, gave her ready assent to those extended excursions.

The distance from the metropolis, and being in a neighbourhood where all were with justice considered honest, and well con-

ducted; and every individual knowing Mrs. Wynne, banishing all idea of fear, they walked out, without the incumbrance of an attendant; and in the third morning after the departure of Lords De Lisle and St. Orville, the uncommon fineness of the weather induced them to take a walk, lengthened beyond their usual rambles; and so interesting they found the scenery, as expanding before them, it lured them on, that it was nearly four o'clock when on their return, as they were about to enter the abbey grounds, to their utter amazement they beheld, in a lonely lane they were going to cross, a chaise and four, with three saddle-horses, without riders, waiting, and all apparently left in care of the two postilions.

This chaise and four, thus waiting in a retired lane, so forcibly reminded Lady Theodosia of her unpropitious elopement, that, overcome by horrid, as well as tender recollections, she fell, almost fainting, into the arms of Mrs. Wynne; and Julia, absorpt by the situation of her beloved friend, observed nothing but Lady Theodosia, until they were surrounded by a party of men in masks.

Lady Theodosia was before too nearly subdued to bear this alarm with firmness, and she instantly fainted in the arms of the almost as senseless Mrs. Wynne, whilst the dismayed, shrieking, and struggling Julia, was seized, and in defiance of her wild exertions to prevent it, borne to the chaise, into which she was lifted by two of the ruffians, and placed between them in the carriage, which, with the blinds drawn up, now moved on with a rapidity that seemed resolved not to be overtaken.

Julia's shrieks and struggles had been but momentary, for, subdued by every direful apprehension that could strike in terror upon her panting heart, she fainted. Her supporters, unwarily, not having provided themselves with any restoratives, her swoon continued for some length of time; and when at last she did recover from it, the horrors of her situation presented themselves in dreadful force to her recollection; and anticipating all of direful calamity in one dreadful suggestion, that Penmorva had thus torn her from St. Orville; she again fainted, and her recovery from one swoon scarcely

gave her an interval of perception, until the anguish of her mind again suspended her faculties, and from one of these insensibilities she was aroused upon the complete and sudden overturn of the chaise in its rapid course, when one of her companions eagerly letting down a window-blind, he admitted a current of air, which blowing keenly upon her face, soon restored her senses, when she learned the nature of the accident they had sustained from this companion's exclamations and calls to the attendants. Her now restored perception quickly led her to know she was totally unhurt; but the moans of her other companion assured her, he had not been so fortunate as herself; and in a few moments more she learned from his lamentations, and the words of sympathy fluently bestowed by his associate, that she had been thus conveyed from her friends by her rejected admirer Lord Westbourn.

This discovery by no means diminished the dreadful alarm of our trembling heroine. Her decided rejection of him led her to believe no motive for himself actuated this

dating outrage; but that, having learned Lord St. Orville's attachment, he had thus cruelly carried her off for the purpose of confining her for life, effectually to remove her as the great impediment to his daughter's fond partiality meeting a reciprocal return. The direful idea of being thus, for ever, separated from St. Orville, and the anguished thought of the misery it would inflict upon him, now drew from poor Julia's eyes a torrent of the bitterest tears she had ever shed; and the agony of her heart thus finding relief, saved her senses from another temporary suspension.

It was now nearly the middle of January, and about seven o'clock in the evening, a thick haze had come on, and it was dark as midnight. They were then in a close forest, but the attendants knew assistance was near at hand, as they were arrived within a furlong of their place of destination. Julia was easily removed from the carriage by Lord Westbourn's associate, who, as well as herself, had escaped unhurt, and whom his lordship commanded, as he prized his future favour, not to let his charge elude his vigilance. The

arm therefore of our trembling, sobbing heroine was now firmly grasped by Lord Westbourn's domestic chaplain, the Rev. Richard Pliant, (his lordship's praiseworthy coadjutor, in this *honourable* achievement) to secure her, while they waited for lights, and further assistance, to extricate Lord Westbourn from the carriage, whose collar-bone was fractured, his arm dreadfully shattered, and his frame bruised, and shook most severely.

As speedily as possible, the lights and assistance they had sent for arrived, when at the desire of Lord Westbourn, Mr. Pliant led, or rather bore the trembling Julia, through many winding paths, and many thickets, to an old farm-house, so sheltered in obscurity, it seemed claimed by solitude for its own dwelling. At the door of this gloomy structure, they were received, not welcomed, by a woman, whose scowling look of direful malignity at our heroine thrilled new terror through her already fear-chilled heart.

This being, who classed among the softer sex, had just entered her fifty-seventh year; in height, she had risen above six feet, and in athletic strength, she seemed to vie with

the most muscular of the sons of Adam. Over this gigantic osseous structure, a brown thick substance, resembling scorched parchment, was tightly drawn, showing in fullest vigour her brawny sinews; her hair, which had once been of the raven's hue, was now mingled with the grizzly tresses of age; her nose was sharp and hooked; her eye-brows, thick, bushy black, and scowling, met across her furrowed forehead, while her eyes, large, dark, and prominent, terrific in fierceness, flashed with a glare, that seemed almost diabolical. Her dress rather increased than diminished the horrors of her aspect; and that want of neatness, which ever bespeaks the absence of virtuous principles, added its disgusting deformity to the *tout ensemble.*

"Follow me," this being said, in a voice so discordant, and devoid of benevolence, that it made the chaplain start, and Julia tremble more convulsively with augmented apprehension. In compliance with this harshly delivered mandate, they followed this representative of inhospitality through a long passage, into a large gloomy parlour.

The damp chill of this room was instantly

perceptible, although a large billet of wood blazed on the wide extended hearth; but Julia's mind was too much occupied by certain sorrows, and anticipated evil, to be sensible of it. In this apartment a cloth was laid, and a table prepared, apparently for three guests to dine. Mr. Pliant shuddered with cold, as he entered this room, and cast an eye of dissatisfaction around, at the comfortless appearance of every thing. Their grim conductress lit a pair of candles, and then retired, casting, as she slowly withdrew, looks of such determined malignity at our poor heroine, that they must have paralyzed her with dismay, had she beheld them; but the moment she had entered this parlour, Mr. Pliant relinquished his firm grasp of her almost benumbed arm, when trembling with cold and apprehension, and with the chill of recent indisposition, and nervous irritation, creeping over the surface of her frame, she threw herself into a chair; and drawing another before her, she laid her head, hid in a handkerchief, upon the back of it, and wept and sobbed, in the full anguish of her heart.

Mr. Pliant now walked up and down this comfortless apartment, in agitated anxiety, for the arrival of Lord Westbourn; his looks proclaiming as forcibly as looks could speak, "Good Heaven! how d--lishly unfortunate it will be, if he should die now, and I not presented to any benefice." At length, the great tumult of feet, voices, and moans issuing along the passage, announced his lordship's arrival. Mr. Pliant threw open the parlour door, by which Lord Westbourn was now supported to a chamber up stairs; and as his lordship passed, he exclaimed, "Pliant, remain with your charge."

In about half an hour after their arrival in this gloomy abode, a man entered the parlour with some warm plates. He appeared prematurely old, and was bent almost double with care and malady; he seemed feebly crawling upon the surface of the earth, in the last stage of an atrophy; his hollow-cheeks wore a hectic flush, and his sunken eyes, the glassy wistfulness of near approaching death; yet, by some supernatural influence, he seemed now inspired with alacrity and power, to make exertion far beyond his strength.

Eagerly his eyes sought, and rested upon Julia; and as they gazed, they filled with tears. "My dear young lady," he said, in the sepulchral voice of exhausted nature, "My dear young lady, why not approach the fire? The evening is intensely cold, and I sadly fear you feel this room damp and chilly. I fain would have had my wife light the fire by times this morning; but, no, she would not; for the worst of Barbara is, she will have her own way in every thing."

"Barbara!" oh how well named, thought Julia, as she tremulously arose; bowed in thankfulness to the man, and with faltering steps advanced to the fire.

The man intently gazed at her, as she moved along, when a beam of long absent pleasure glanced over his face; he clasped his hands in sudden ecstasy. "It is, it is, her own sweet self! Thank! thank the Almighty! all will be right at last," he exclaimed, and instantly left the room.

Julia's horror increased. "This poor man," she thought, "is certainly insane. Oh! was it not for that dire malady, as he seemed compassionate, he might befriend her."

At length, to the manifest joy of Mr. Pliant, a vermicilli soup, a fine boiled turkey, and an excellent ham, were brought in by the consumptive man, and Barbara. Mr. Pliant, with pleasure dancing in his before inanimate eyes, drew his chair to the table, and demanded from Julia what he should help her to? "A little soup," she said, "as that might warm her." With the utmost difficulty, she contrived to swallow a very few spoonfuls; then all at once, sorrow seemed about to suffocate her; she pushed the plate away, and piteously she wept.

"My dear young lady," said the man, humanely approaching her, "I fear you do not like the soup. Try something else. Have a slice of turkey. There are wild ducks coming, and a fricassee of chickens, all excellent, I assure you, for Barbara is no despicable cook."

"Oh! I do thank you, Sir," said Julia, "but I cannot eat."

"But, you ought to eat, you ought to be gay and glad, and feel the presentment of every good," replied the man cheeringly, and looking elevated, by that joy he seemed anxious to inspire her with.

"Ought she?" said his wife, with a malign sneer, indicative of some most horribly mysterious meaning.

"Barbara, for the mercy of Heaven, what can you mean?" softly articulated the husband, shuddering with alarm. Barbara answered only by a convulsive laugh of horrid exultation, and quitted the room.

The husband, astonished and dismayed, now found it difficult to conceal his feelings from Julia, whom he saw was appalled with terror; but with an effort to lessen her alarm, by vailing his own, he kindly, and as calmly as he could, intreated her to have some wine.

"I have choice wines," he said.—"What say you, my dear young lady, to a glass of Constantia? You never drank better, even abroad."

Down went Mr. Pliant's knife and fork, his eyes dilating with the selfish joy of a voluptuary in good cheer. "We will drink each other's health, young lady, in a glass of mine host's Constantia," said he.

The compassionate host now took up a decanter to pour out the wine, but his hand shook so violently, he could not accom-

plish it. Barbara, who had just then entered, snatched the bottle from him, filled the glasses with a steady hand; and as she turned from the table, said, in a hoarse murmuring tone of bitter asperity—

"Had you trembled in the *right* moment, Ferdinand, it had been well."

At length, Mr. Pliant seemed suddenly to recollect his patron, and inquired, "what his lordship was to dine upon?"

"His broken bones," replied Barbara, savagely. Ferdinand mildly said, "When the surgeon, who has been sent express for, arrives, we shall learn what is proper to be prepared for his lordship."

Julia's panting heart thrilled with the joy of renovated hope, upon hearing of this surgeon, whom she mentally implored the mercy of Heaven to inspire with the power and inclination to rescue her from her present dreadful situation: but soon was that hope destroyed; the surgeon she saw not, and every precaution was taken to prevent her making any effort to obtain assistance from him. The moment of his arrival, Mr. Pliant (who had done ample justice to all the excellent dishes of Barbara's

cookery, and Ferdinand's choice wines) was summoned to attend his patron, during the operation of reducing the fractures; and Barbara took his post as guard to their lovely prisoner.

Barbara, disdaining the impediment of ceremony, drew her chair to the fire, placed her feet upon the fender, and drawing out her snuff-box, took pinch after pinch, still eying with looks of implacable, diabolical malignity, our poor dismayed and trembling heroine. Julia believing gold was the only power that could find influence over Barbara, now, with all the sweet, persuasive eloquence of innocence in distress, pleaded for her aid in her escape from Lord Westbourn, and bade her name her own terms.

"My guardian, Lord Ashgrove," said she, "I know will amply make recompence for you, if you restore me to him."

"I mean you to escape from Lord Westbourn, and by my contrivance too," replied Barbara, with a horrible grin of demoniac exultation—"Yes, yes, you shall enrich me ere I have done with you. You owe me much, and time shall not flag until you pay me this long, long arrear."

"Gracious Heaven!" exclaimed Julia, in painful astonishment, "what for you can I owe?"

"My peace, my peace. You have bereft me of every comfort that life once yielded to me. You have given me misery and fear, and every trembling horror for my portion."

Julia's terror was now almost as powerful as human nature could sustain. She no longer had a doubt upon her tortured mind of this woman's being a maniac too; and that Lord Westbourn had brought her to an asylum for derangement, to confine her for life, amongst the most unfortunate of her species.

Barbara now, starting from her chair, threw it with violence from her; and standing erect with awful, fear inspiring solemnity, stretched forth her hands. "Behold," she said, "detested child of her I hated, these shrivelled skeletons of what once were limbs, round, plump, and fleshy as your own. Yes, such they were, when they received you in the moment of your birth."

"My birth!" exclaimed Julia; "were you in Tuscany when I was born?"

"Tuscany!" repeated Barbara, contemptuously, "I never, thank my stars, was out of Britain, nor were you born in Tuscany. No, in one of the western isles of Scotland you first drew breath. The *accoucheuse* of your *accursed* mother tells you this tale of wonder. I brought you into life—and *I!*"—And Barbara again burst into a laugh of demoniac exultation.

Julia's conviction of Barbara's insanity was now so direfully established, that she was paralysed with horror, expecting each passing moment to fall a victim to some sudden paroxysm of that evident malignity she believed inspired by her dreadful malady; therefore, with something like joy as a temporary rescue, she saw the return of Mr. Pliant, who came now to finish mine host's choice wines, and Barbara departed.

Ferdinand brought in tea, and kindly told our heroine, as an inducement for her drinking some, "That in China she could scarcely find better."

The fortitude of Julia seemed to gather

strength with the magnitude of her distresses. Her only hope, she now fully believed, rested upon Heaven; and what hope, her piety forcibly told her, could equal that which looked for aid from the mercy of the Omnipotent? And if it was His will that calamity should befal her, in the moment she had believed happiness was within her reach for ever, it was meet that she should bow in submission; and as she mentally articulated—"To Thy will, be mine the Christian's meek resignation," she compelled herself to drink some tea, to aid her spirits in sustaining her through her miseries; while Mr. Pliant repeated bumper after bumper, until he scarcely possessed power to articulate eulogiums upon that liquid, which was hastily turning in effect to a most potent soporific.

CHAPTER XII.

This evening seemed to Julia endless, since grief and apprehension kept sad and trembling vigil with her. At length Barbara appeared, and told her, "It was time for her to go to rest." Julia meekly followed her up stairs, to a most gloomy, comfortless chamber. On the hearth lay a billet of wood, but it was unlit; and our heroine gently asked, "If she might not be permitted to have a fire, as it was very cold?"

"No," Barbara fiercely replied, "had that lord, who brought you hither, been able to look about him, you must have had one; but now he will never know it.—Yes, you are cold, and colder you will be ere morning. Come, come, hasten to bed, or your candle will not serve your turn."

"I have not night things," said Julia.

"There is a box of things, that lord brought for you; enough I dare say to

serve you for to-night." And now Barbara lit about an inch of candle, and leaving it for Julia, retired, locked the chamber-door, and took the key with her.

Julia felt no inclination whatever to go into a bed, in that damp, cold room; she therefore determined upon still remaining in her pelisse and tippet, the walking-dress she had been carried off in, and only to lie down to rest upon the outside of the bed, and make a pillow of her muff. Having settled this arrangement promptly in her mind, she hastened, meekly upon her knees, to address the Deity, to thank Him for past protection, and supplicate His future care. As the sacred duty of prayer had ever been considered by Julia, even in moments of happiness, as the most important business of her life, so in this hour of peril and distress she naturally dedicated more than her usual time to this pious employment; so that, to her inconceivable chagrin, when she arose from her knees, her candle was so far in its wane, that she could form no hope of its lighting her through her meditated search round her sombre apartment.

Julia now fancied she saw something like a door in the black oak wainscot, in the opposite side of the room to that she had entered from; and eager to examine if it was open, and where it led to, she seized her candle; but the moment she raised it from the table, it sunk down in the socket, and expired. But though now bereft of the great aid of light, she contrived to grope her way to the spót she wished to find, where, to her infinite joy, she soon laid her hand upon a latch, and, to her increasing gladness, found it was an open door, which led into a passage, in which were two windows, and by the feeble light admitted by them, she, after remaining some moments stationary, until her vision became cleared from the reflected glare of the lately flashing candle, was enabled to distinguish her way plainly to the termination of the passage, where a door, securely fastened, cut off her further progress.

Sighing with disappointment to this very vague hope of escaping, Julia was returning to her chamber, when the sound of approaching horses arrested her course, and

fixed her at a window, which, though barred, and not made to open, she saw had several broken panes of glass in it, through which she hoped her voice might reach the horsemen. In a few moments she beheld a numerous cavalcade approach, and stop beneath the very window she stood at. There was just sufficient light for her to discern that they all dismounted, and proceeded to unfasten something from their saddles. In a moment more, and just as she was about to supplicate their aid, she beheld Barbara, with a lanthorn in her hand, standing in the midst of them; and again Julia heaved the anguished sigh of disappointed hope.

And now our heroine saw Barbara remove, what to all appearance was the mouth and machinery of a draw-well, and two of the men raise a trap-door beneath where it had stood. Instantly these men disappeared with the lanthorn, by descending into some cavern or chamber beneath, when their associates lost no time in following them, each bearing some burden with them, but of what form or nature, the

absence of sufficient light allowed not Julia to ascertain, who, trembling in conviction of these being a numerous banditti with which Ferdinand was leagued, doubted not their burdens were the spoils of the night; and oh, horror! perhaps the bodies of those they had murdered.

Now shuddering with augmented terror, and her heart chilled with every apprehension, Julia retired to her chamber; and finding out the bed, she threw herself upon it in an agony of tears; and weeping and praying alternately, she continued in her recumbent station about an hour, when a moon-beam breaking through the half-closed door which led into the passage drew her from her bed. The moon was just arisen, and although far from shining brightly, still emitted sufficient light for her exploring the passage, but nothing to awaken any gleam of hope could she discover; and as she now could from the window distinguish a path-way, she determined there to take her anxious station, with the faint expectation that some one

might yet pass that way, whom she might implore to pity and befriend her.

She had been at this cold and anxious post about a quarter of an hour, when she suddenly heard footsteps close to the fastened door, and instantly after the sound of Ferdinand's and Barbara's voices in altercation; and although their voices were lowered to something like a whisper, she distinctly heard every word that passed between them, through a chasm, made by a warpt pannel in the door.

"For the mercy of Heaven, Barbara," exclaimed Ferdinand, "what are you about to do with that dirk? Surely, surely, not to imbrue your hands in the blood of sleeping innocence."

"I have determined it," she replied, "nor shall your feeble efforts restrain me."

"But if your soul is so black in turpitude as this; if you have indeed outlived the feelings of humanity, consider your own safety. Unless you make one general massacre, know you not she will be demanded from us to-morrow?"

"Fool! think you I know not how to provide for my own security? Her slight body, with my finger and thumb I could remove. I have left clean sheets ready in the room to fasten to the bars of her window; by them, mark me, she effects her escape; and am I to be suspected, if in her wanderings from this house in the dead of night she should never more be heard of?"

Our poor terror convulsed heroine, now almost fainting with dismay, well remembered Barbara's laying some clean linen on a chair, near a window in her chamber, and had now nothing but dreadful certainty, that it was her murder this fiend was thus intent upon.

"Oh! Barbara!" exclaimed the agitated husband, "and have you had the cruelty to meditate all this?—You—you—who heard her first cries!"

"I!—I! who heard her *first* cries, am eager to hear her *last*; but hold me not; vain is the attempt: your strength cannot cope with mine. I am determined, and will not longer live a proscribed wretch, ever flying from the wrath of him you so justly

offended. Yes, pusillanimous villain! you took the price of blood; and then, pale, trembling coward, shrunk from the crime you had agreed to; deceived your employer: and have you since been happier than you would have been, had you bereft her of life? No, no, no! That accursed fiend, St. Clair, betrayed you; told him a child still lived. She received a handsome annuity for withholding the child's claims, while you, exposed to his vengeance, have been wandering about the surface of the earth, seeking rest and concealment; yet finding neither, until through my policy we settled in the same parish with him; the last place in creation he would seek for you: yet still, still have we not been wretched, ever expecting that discovery and vengeance, you (but half a villain) drew on yourself, by your wise compassion, in sparing the mother of this devoted child? —Mark me! *you* first taught me to connive at murder: I embarked not in crimes by halves, as you did. No, steadily I have since pursued my course. My heart, unknowing pity, is adamant—is the heart for

crimes. Yes, in her coffin *he* shall see her. Then, then shall our safety be secured, and his vengeance no more be apprehended by us."

"This is rashness, folly, madness, Barbara. Have not I embraced means devoid of guilt to secure our safety and great rewards?—By the discovery I have at length determined upon making to Lord Westbourn, the dear child will at length be led to her birth-right; and the villain who would have despoiled her of it, and planned the barbarous murder of her innocent, angelic mother, become revealed to the world, and his power of injuring me effectually be destroyed."

"What false, absurd conclusions!" replied the savage wife—"The murder was not committed; therefore his life cannot be forfeited, and *that* spared, his vengeance becomes more implacable than ever, by your wise exposure of his crimes. Unhand me, Ferdinand; your feeble efforts to restrain me, I again repeat, are vain. For our mutual safety, for vengeance against this child, who has caused us such years of

misery, I will strike the blow. And hark ye, Ferdinand! should she resemble her innocent, *angelic mother* when in her shroud, I will strike her heart again, and still again, until revenge and never-stifled jealousy are sated."

Julia's limbs, paralyzed by the dismay of direful apprehension, no longer able to support her, she had sunk to the ground; and was endeavouring to raise herself upon her knees, that she might breathe her last accents in prayer, when the door suddenly darted open. Barbara rushed through it with a dirk and lanthorn in her hand, followed by the feeble Ferdinand, still grasping her gown to detain her. Julia's black drapery left her so completely in shade, that Barbara saw her not; but Ferdinand's glassy eyes rested on her. Instantly he relinquished his grasp.

"Go on then, and Heaven forgive you, Barbara!" he falteringly said. She did go on; and the moment she entered the chamber, he closed the door after her, and turned the key upon her: he now hastened to the panting Julia, and bade her follow him.—

"Not one moment can be lost," he said, "for locks will not long resist her potent strength."

Julia now felt as if inspired by Heaven, with quick circulating renovation, of both mental and personal courage; and committing herself in a hasty aspiration to the care of her merciful Creator, rapidly followed Ferdinand through the passage-door, which he now (though trembling with agitation) locked and bolted.

He was provided with a lamp; and now swiftly they descended a stair-case, and entered a winding passage, at the termination of which was a door; and Ferdinand now, to his utter dismay, found it secured against them.

"Oh, mercy!" exclaimed Ferdinand, in dreadful consternation, "she has the key, and will, to a certainty, effect her liberation from above, before I could possibly get you round the other way, to place you under the protection of my lord's people."—He paused, in painful perplexity; and again Julia's heart grew sad in bitter disappointment. "There is but one place of safety left," he suddenly cried, "and bold and

intrepid as her spirit is, she has not courage to follow you thither, in the absence of day-light—I mean the church."

"Oh! let us, let us fly for it," tremulously exclaimed Julia, "that I know is sanctuary safe."

"Not from Barbara," he replied, "but that, fortunately, the only fear she knows is superstitious apprehension."

They now swiftly (at least as swiftly as the poor emaciated Ferdinand could move) passed into a kind of pantry, in which, through a sliding pannel, they proceeded along a damp and dreary kind of subterraneous passage, that led them at length into a vault belonging to the parish church, where our shuddering and amazed heroine beheld, amid the coffins piled up there, with sacred reverence, numerous kegs, containing *spirits*, more to be dreaded by the living, than those the mouldering tenements of mortal clay enclosed. Out of this vault they ascended by a flight of steps, and through a door which Ferdinand was provided with a key to open, they entered a small and remarkably neat church.

Ferdinand now arranged for Julia's

taking possession of the rector's pew, (as it was lined, carpeted, and cushioned, and therefore warmer than the others) whilst he should go and provide for her future safety from the malice of Barbara. "But fear nothing here," he added; "although I cannot leave the lamp with you, as its light gleaming through the windows might attract attention, and lead that inquiry hither, I have reasons to fear and shun."

This, of all things, would have been the wish of Julia, since it might prove the means of rescuing her from Lord Westbourn, to whom she found Ferdinand was devoted, and doubted not it was by giving her into his lordship's people's care he meant to secure her safety from his sanguinary wife; but she could offer no objection to his taking away the light, yet firmly resolved, the moment he departed, to try if she could not escape by one of the church-windows, which seemed to her not too high, by the aid of hassocs, to mount to, nor too closely barred for her to get through.

The instant therefore that Ferdinand had

locked the door of the vault, they had entered by after him, Julia seized up two hassocs, and took them to the nearest window, through which the moon now penetrated its brightened rays; and as she was tremulously returning for two more, the church-clock chimed the hour, and immediately after struck twelve. Our heroine felt astonishment at its not being later; for it seemed almost incredible to her, that so many mysterious, extraordinary, and horrible adventures, could have been doomed for her to encounter in so short an interval of time as eight hours.

"They were active hours indeed," she mentally said, "and little, little thinks my poor St. Orville how his long-loved Julia has spent those hours. Oh! if he knew!" And now, weeping at the idea of what he would feel, did he know all the perils she had escaped, and was still encompassed by, she was in the act of raising two more hassocs, to convey to her anxious structure, when suddenly she let them drop, appalled by the noise of an opening lock; and in a moment more, slowly grating upon its rusty

hinges, she beheld one of the side entrance doors unclose, and two figures, closely muffled in great coats, enter, one leaning upon the arm of the other, who bore a half-darkened lanthorn in his hand.

Julia now wistfully observed them, while trembling in the suspense of hope and fear, to learn what their appearance portended, ere she announced or attempted to conceal herself. She saw, as they slowly proceeded along one of the side aisles, that he who leaned upon his companion was of a noble mien, though far advanced in life: he looked pale and emaciated; he held in his hand a white handkerchief, which he frequently applied to his eyes, and he seemed oppressed with sorrow; and his companion she conjectured to be a respectable domestic. They now advanced to one corner of the church, where they stopped, and where Julia beheld a superb monument, which from the bricks, mortar, and stones, that lay scattered near, she saw was either erecting or repairing.

"This then," said the venerable stranger, breaking silence in a voice of tremulous

emotion, "is the tomb of my child—the last of my unfortunate race. Leave me to my sorrow for a few moments, Dormer."

Dormer, setting the lanthorn upon the base of the monument, with a profound bow, respectfully retired.

The afflicted parent now threw himself upon the sarcophagus which contained all that remained of his child, and wept in the anguish of his heart; and so venerable was his appearance, and so affecting his affliction, that many of Julia's still flowing tears dropped in sympathy for his woes. He had freely indulged in his sorrows for nearly half an hour, when Dormer approached him.

"My dear lord, and beloved master," said he, "you must pardon me for interrupting you; but remembering your recent severe illness, and feeling the dampness of this place, and the cold of the night, I cannot longer forbear persuading you to give up this sad indulgence to your unavailing sorrow."

"Unavailing! Oh! too true, it is unavailing; but give me a little longer, Dor-

mer. I have promised you this visit shall never be repeated; and remember this is the only tomb of a daughter I have to weep upon. My cherub! my darling! her—her ashes were never found for me!" exclaimed the sobbing father, almost convulsed with grief; and now wildly starting up, he added in a tone of agonized despair, "My implacable cruelty, my savage, unrelenting barbarity, sent her to that accursed place, where she became a prey to that direful calamity!—Oh! my child! my child!" And now, no longer able to stand beneath the burden of his griefs, he tottered, and must have fallen to the ground, had not the attentive Dormer caught him in his arms.

"Come, my dear lord," said this faithful domestic, taking up the lanthorn, "I must lead you from this too affecting place; but you had better sit a few moments to recover your power of walking home. Yonder pew is lined, and probably cushioned; therefore, without apprehension of taking cold, you may venture to compose yourself there."

They now entered the rector's pew, and

Dormer had just seated his lord, whose head still rested on his shoulder, when the form of Julia, standing in trembling hope before him, first struck his view. Promptly he raised the lanthorn to her face, to see if, in reality, the pew was pre-occupied by a human being; when uttering a forcible expression of amazement, he suddenly dashed the lanthorn down, and, in its fall, the light was extinguished.

"What, what can your exclamation and your frantic action mean?" demanded his lord, in astonishment.

"Pardon, pardon me, my lord; all was occasioned by surprise, upon finding a lady had taken possession of the pew before us."

The afflicted father, ashamed and hurt at having his secret sorrows witnessed by a stranger, now made a painful effort to resume his firmness, and by a powerful exertion succeeded, when, in a tone of courtesy, he inquired, "If it was any lady who required protection?"

"At present, sir, the child of so great distress, she has all claim from your humanity, and implores from pity its safe pro-

tection," tremulously replied our weeping heroine.

"Such a plea, and in *that* voice, cannot be resisted," said the stranger, in a tone of violent agitation. "Oh! Dormer, once did not a voice like that sound sweetly in our ears?—Oh! how I remember it!——Heavens! man, are you paralysed? why tremble so?—Our light is extinguished, and now we doubly want it."

"I did it for the best," said Dormer.

"What means this wildness, Dormer? Does superstitious fear form then a part of your composition?"

"The moon-beams, sir, will make light for us," said Julia; "I worked from them in my feeble exertions for escape, before you came."

"Escape! Then—then may I ask how you got in here?"

"Oh, my story is so great deal romantic, I almost fear to tell it; lest it gain not credence for me. I was hither brought for sanctuary."

"And yet you strove to escape from it!"

"I did," said Julia, "to aim for flying

from another much certain calamity. At four o'clock last, I was much safe and happy, in protection from my friends in Wiltshire. I was at Black Tower abbey. Where I am I not now know, but am pleading, from a quite stranger, to give me protection from certain captivity, or pitiless murder."

"Murder!" repeated the stranger, in a tone of horror, catching her hand, and drawing her near to him to save her, as it seemed, even from the sound. "Dormer," he said, "you have pistols, and be prepared. Though romantic your story, lady, yet told in *that voice*, all you utter will go with instant conviction to my heart. But how—how came you from Black Tower abbey into the New Forest, in so short an interval?"

"Lord Westbourn did steal me from my friends, and brought me to much shocking house, near quite to this church. Perhaps you know Lord Westbourn?"

"*Perhaps I do*; and since *he* stole you, I am taught to know you are handsome; your voice (your voice of magic) has already told me you are young. Black

Tower abbey I well know; for the amiable Lady Frances Harcourt I number among my friends. Your having been admitted beneath her roof, assures me you are to be respected. Your perilous situation claims my protection, and you shall have it. I feel an unconquerable wish to know your name; and to entitle me to ask it, I will tell you mine. I am the now childless Duke of Avondale."

"Oh!" exclaimed Julia, starting from him, and shuddering—"You, alas! were my dear father's much terrible foe, and made for him a life of wretchedness—But" she continued, promptly returning to him, "he did forgive you; and why should I remember, when now you are unhappy? and beside too, you are to dear Doctor Sydenham friend, and for him I must respect you; but—but my lord duke, as the child to distress, I now implore your good aid—not as the child to my father. Seek not, ask not for my name. Indeed it would not pleasure be for you."

"You have yourself already announced it, by naming Sydenham," said the agitated duke, kindly pressing her hand.—"Did then your father nobly forgive me? Oh! that was

more than I ever did myself. You are Sydenham's fascinator—De Clifford's child; —but—but he should not have wedded another, ere the ashes of my child were cold:—however attractive *your* mother, how could he so soon forget my lovely Adelaide?"

CHAPTER XIII.

Dormer having now recovered from his astonishment, and the consternation and alarm for his lord, which the sight of Julia's countenance had thrown him into, again intreated his grace to return home. "For your own sake, my lord duke, and for this young lady's too, I intreat you to go. The cold is intense, and those she was placed here in sanctuary from may discover her retreat, and prove too many for one brace of pistols to contend with."

Dormer's advice was too conclusive not to be complied with. "Come, Miss De Clifford," said his grace, "and I will conduct you to your adorer, Sydenham."

"Merciful Heaven! is Doctor Sydenham near to me?" exclaimed Julia; and now believing her deliverance from Barbara and Lord Westbourn certain, and her restoration to Lord St. Orville secure, she sunk from the hand of the duke upon her knees, to give her

pious thanks to Him who had heard her cry, and looked with mercy on her. Although her thanksgiving was ardent, it was concise; and quickly she was upon her feet again, ready to depart with the Duke of Avondale.

When they reached the church-yard, his grace observing the only covering of Julia's head was a thin lace veil, expressed his apprehensions of her getting cold.

"Oh!" she said, "I took my hat off when I lay down for rest, and so without it did make escape from the ruthless Barbara."

"Barbara!" repeated the duke, "oh! how that name paralyses me!"

"And well may it me," said Julia, "sure I have cause for trembling, since name it is for the much cruel woman, who would have deprived me from life not one hour since, only for interposition of her greatly humane husband, the poor and very sick Ferdinand."

"Oh! how those names chill my heart," said the duke, in a low and hurried tone—"What a strange coincidence of names! Those were the names of the husband and

wife, to whose care I consigned my helpless child, when I cruelly tore her from her husband, your then distracted father."

Julia started. "Those then, I have belief, are the very same, my lord; and oh! Almighty Providence! can what they said have meaning from very truth?"

"What—what did they say?" eagerly and tremulously the duke demanded.

"I will tell for Doctor Sydenham, my lord; and if he should think it right our saying it to your grace, he will let you know it."

"The wife, capable of attempting murder, and Westbourn, leagued with them, so as to make them his agents in this extraordinary business of stealing you from your friends! These people were respected, confidential dependents of my amiable, unfortunate son-in-law, Lord Glenbrook, and can they be so depraved?"

They had some time entered an extensive park, and now arrived at a stately mansion, into which they were soon admitted, when Dormer softly said to Julia—

"For the love of Heaven, madam, shade

your face from his grace, until Doctor Sydenham is with him."

Julia, readily conjecturing this request was made from her resemblance to Lady Adelaide, carefully complied with it. She was conducted by the duke into a spacious 'drawing room, where still a cheerful fire blazed, and Dormer was dispatched to Doctor Sydenham's apartments, to summon him (but with caution) if he was not yet retired to rest.

Doctor Sydenham, widely awake to the conviction of his being near to the end of life's short journey, spent an hour, at least, every night after he parted from the friends he passed the day with in meditation and serious reading. The Duke of Avondale, though scarcely recovered from his late severe illness, had only arrived that day at this, the principal seat of Lord Glenbrook, where he had come under the pretence of change of air, but, in fact, for the project of visiting the tomb of Lady Montalvan, who was here interred with her husband's ancestors. As affliction had strewed the [illegible] grace with its thorns, he had

lately no wish for early retiring to it; so that the good doctor had sat up with him until past eleven, and had but that moment rung for his servant to undress him, when Dormer tapped at his door, with the duke's request to see him immediately.

"His grace is ill again," said Doctor Sydenham, in alarm.

"No, sir, perfectly well; but he wishes to see you upon account of a visitor just arrived, a very particular friend of yours, whom his grace fears you will be much agitated at so unexpectedly meeting here."

Doctor Sydenham was now completely agitated; and Dormer continued—"Travelling this way your friend's carriage met with an accident, but perfectly safe and well you will find her, sir."

"Her! who—who is it, good Dormer?"

"Miss De Clifford, sir."

Doctor Sydenham, though powerfully agitated by astonishment and joy, hastened to his beloved young friend. Julia flew into his extended arms; and as she wept upon his paternal bosom, the tears of grateful joy, at this full conviction of security from the dire-

ful perils she had lately been encompassed by, her veil dropped off.—In a few moments, when this burst of emotion had a little subsided, she raised her head, and was about to tell her venerable friend, that to the Duke of Avondale she was indebted for her rescue from great calamity, when his grace, for the first time, obtained a full view of her face.

"Merciful Heaven!" he exclaimed, starting from his chair, and meaning to approach her; "Sydenham, you told me something of this; but I did not, could not, expect to find it thus;" and now, pale, trembling, and unable to articulate further, he back into his seat.

Dormer, who himself had been so instantaneously struck by Julia's resemblance to Lady Adelaide, had loitered still in the room, and expecting some alarming consequence when the veil dropped, ran for some wine to give his lord, while Doctor Sydenham, and our sympathising heroine, hastily approached his grace to afford him every assistance in their power.

Successfully his grace now struggled for

articulation—when promptly catching Julia's hand, and drawing her nearer to him, and while anxiously gazing at her, he exclaimed, "How is this, Sydenham—how can this child inherit so miraculous a resemblance to persons bearing no affinity to her? Why does she so forcibly resemble my darling child; and still more, infinitely more, my adored, ever lamented duchess? Her voice is Adelaide's in every tone; her face in every feature and expression, my own Julia's."

"It is indeed so," said Doctor Sydenham. "Her extraordinary resemblance to her grace, and Lady Adelaide, first interested me for Miss De Clifford, and led me on to love her."

"Adelaide," said the duke, still gazing intently at the blushing Julia, "was extremely like her mother; yet, still not half so beautiful; but this young creature is my Julia's self, burst again into life, exactly the very counterpart of Lady Montalvan at the time I led her to the altar."

"Oh! speak to me, Miss De Clifford! Tell me you are related to my angel wife. Make

out the relationship, and be it ever so remotely, I will adore you."

Julia, turning pale as death, and trembling with conflicting emotions, sunk at his feet.

"Oh! Merciful Heaven!" exclaimed the almost breathless duke, "that action expresses such affecting reverence, so much more than common sympathy, I shall go distracted unless its motive is explained to me."

"Julia, my sweet child," said Doctor Sydenham, tenderly raising her, "what can you mean?"

"Oh!" she tremulously replied, "it was spontaneous from resistless impulse, arising from the greatly mysterious things I heard and thought for the ravings of insanity."

"From Ferdinand and Barbara did you hear them? Oh tell me, tell me!" exclaimed his grace, with terrifying eagerness.

The attentive Dormer now returned, recommended a glass of wine to each of the agitated party, a prescription thankfully followed: when Julia, a little renovated by it, seated between the Duke of Avondale and

Doctor Sydenham, related her adventures from the moment she became the prisoner of Lord Westbourn, until his grace entered the church, but not without frequent interruptions from the duke, who, the moment he heard that Barbara announced herself as Julia's mother's *accoucheuse* in one of the western isles of Scotland, franticly clasped her in his arms, and pronounced her incontrovertibly his grand-daughter, the child of his Adelaide and De Clifford.

Doctor Sydenham said, "There certainly could be little doubt upon the subject; but that Ferdinand ought to be secured, and either persuaded or compelled to give full and unequivocal testimony to prevent future suspicions or litigation."

The almost franticly agitated duke now proposed rousing every magistrate and constable in the neighbourhood, and going to the commanding officer at Southampton, to obtain a troop of dragoons, to surround the house of Ferdinand, and secure him and his diabolical wife.

But Doctor Sydenham, something more calm in his perturbation, advised that a party

of the domestics, attended by Dormer and his own trusty servant, should go to the church where Ferdinand had promised to return for Julia, and to remain there perdue, until he arrived, when they could quietly secure him, and apart from his wife; and apparently full of good will towards Julia, he would be likely to give more faithful evidence.

Dormer now was summoned from the adjoining room, where he had respectfully retired, and received full orders from his grace for securing Ferdinand, and bringing him as speedily as possible thither; and Julia's feelings of gratitude led her to earnest intreaties, that poor sick Ferdinand might be gently and kindly treated.

Two hours elapsed before Ferdinand was brought into the presence of the Duke of Avondale; and this tedious interval was a time of anxious expectation to his grace, our heroine, and Doctor Sydenham, and during which, the agitated duke made her whom he seemed determined should be proved his grandchild repeat, and still repeat, every word which Ferdinand and Barbara had uttered in

her hearing, with all her knowledge of Lord Westbourn.

The moment Ferdinand, pale, trembling, and dismayed, in full conviction of instant destruction, beheld our heroine, he uttered a doleful cry, staggered, and must have fallen to the ground, but for the support of Dormer. "Oh just G—d!" he articulated, "I am not then permitted to expiate my crimes, by securing her at least from destruction."

"Fear nothing for me; fear not for yourself, my much good friend," said Julia, kindly, to him.

"Miss De Clifford is in perfect safety, and *protects you* now," said the agitated duke.

"Delude me not," faltered out Ferdinand. "Do I not know whose house this is, and that she has at length fallen into the power of her deadly foe? As for myself, his vengeance can shorten my days but little. Disease has already sealed my doom. Where, may I ask, is Lord Glenbrook?"

"Far distant from hence," said Doctor Sydenham, "and knows nothing of Miss De Clifford's being here."

"But, but he will. You are his agents."

"I am agent to no man," said his grace. "I am the Duke of Avondale; yet fear nothing from me, Ferdinand. I forgive you every injury you have committed or meditated against me, or my family. I promise you safe protection, and rich rewards, if you fully disclose to me every circumstance within your knowledge relative to the birth of this child."

"I cannot, alas! I cannot, my good lord, for I have given my solemn, sacred promise, to reveal them only to a gentleman, a sincere friend to the young lady, who has sworn to prove her birth, and secure her inheritance for her."

"Yes," said the duke, craftily, "I know all that; you mean Lord Westbourn.—You have no great secret in your possession. I am acquainted with the leading facts, and only wished to hear from you a circumstantial narrative.—Ferdinand Stukely, I already know this is my grandchild."—Ferdinand started—"I also know who corrupted your principles, and gave you a large bribe to murder my cherub Adelaide. I also know

the pity of your nature led you from the fell crimes. You spared her, and in the Hebrides my daughter bore this child, and Barbara Stukely was her *accoucheuse*."

"Oh! Merciful Heaven! you do know all," exclaimed the amazed Ferdinand (not aware that all this knowledge had been gleaned from what had fallen from himself and Barbara in the hearing of our heroine), advancing to the duke, and throwing himself at the feet of his grace; "She is indeed the child of Lady Adelaide; but oh! have mercy, mercy on me!"

"I will have mercy on you, for you had mercy on my child. I will have mercy, for you saved my grandchild," said the powerfully agitated duke, reaching out his hand to raise the trembling culprit. "Rise, my children's pitying friend, take that chair near the fire—cease to fear, for I will protect and reward you. Dormer, give him some wine; and do you and Mason* remain as witnesses to what, I trust, he will now fully relate."

And now the duke's attention was pain-

* Dr. Sydenham's servant.

fully called to our heroine, who, the moment she heard the declaration of Ferdinand —"She is indeed the child of Lady Adelaide," fell totally insensible into the arms of Doctor Sydenham.

Every thing was promptly done for her recovery, which, at length, was effected, when her anxious, agitated grandfather, in all the tenderness of a heart preparing itself to idolize her, intreated she would go to rest in the apartment which had been prepared for him; but she pleaded so earnestly for permission to remain, and hear all the interesting communications of Ferdinand, that his grace (who was fully resolved to make some atonement for his cruelty to her parents, by indulging her in every wish) complied with her request, and Ferdinand, recruited by the wine, and encouraged by the kindness of his grace, and his promises of protection and reward, now gave most circumstantially the eagerly demanded narrative.

But as other incidents with which it is necessary for our readers to become acquainted, as pertaining to the history of our heroine's parents, and her own early

misfortunes, must unavoidably have some of Ferdinand's communications mingled with them, we will not relate them separately, but to the best of our ability attempt to blend them into one general narrative.

CHAPTER XIV.

The Duke of Avondale had, at the age of twenty-four, been united to the elder of the beautiful co-heiresses of the then lately deceased Earl of Montalvan. The earldom being in fee, the Duchess of Avondale inherited it with the family estates and hereditary honours, while the personals she shared, by her father's will, with her only sister, the wife of Lord Lofty, the first baroness of Fontsevern, and grandmother to the present one, our reader's acquaintance. The duke was ardently attached to his beautiful wife, who had only entered upon her nineteenth year, when he had led her to the altar; but six years only was she spared to constitute his happiness. She left him one son and two daughters, and expired in his arms in about a fortnight after the birth of the youngest (the unfortunate Lady Adelaide) by a cold caught in the first week of her confinement. This child, although she

had caused him such direful affliction, that time had not even the power to blunt the poignancy of, became the treasure of his sad heart, the most loved and cherished of his children, because she resembled most his Julia. His son and elder daughter were truly amiable, promising all of excellence a parent's heart could wish for, and to them he was a fond indulgent father, never permitting his adoring partiality to the little Adelaide (four years younger than her sister) to interfere with their interest, or their happiness.

At the age of seventeen, calamitously for herself and family, Lady Sophia Montrose captivated, and was captivated by, the Earl of Glenbrook, an extremely handsome young man, with manners replete with all those seducing refinements most likely to allure a mind of delicacy; with conduct the most specious, and eloquence in conversation, persuasive, plausible, nay almost fascinating. With the fullest approbation of their mutual friends, their union was determined upon, and was about to take place, when it was direfully postponed.

The lover and brother went without attendants into a boat upon an extensive lake at Avondale-priory, the principal seat of the Duke of Avondale. Lord Montalvan (who inherited that earldom, in right of his late mother) fell in, and was unfortunately drowned. Lord Glenbrook returned to the abbey, dripping with wet, and in a state of the most apparent horror and affliction; he was an excellent swimmer, and an expert diver; 'he had done both,' he said, 'to strive with all his powers to save his beloved Montalvan; but in vain,' and so poignant appeared his grief upon the melancholy event, that although the death of Lord Montalvan secured to Lady Sophia all the wealth and honours of her deceased mother, as well as immense property from her father, in division with her young sister, suspicion never glanced at him, as the direful cause of the amiable Lord Montalvan's death; if it had, it had glanced rightly.—Beneath the veil of every excellence of heart, as well as sweetness of manner, lay concealed in the bosom of Lord Glenbrook avarice, the most insatiable; and so uncontrolled was his gratification

of this direful vice, that even crimes, the most diabolical, he scrupled not the commission of to feed it. As he and Lord Montalvan rowed along the lake, the latter dropped his oar, when on reaching for it, Lord Glenbrook, inspired by the auspicious opportunity of adding to his riches, pushed him over, and then leaped in himself, not to save him, but force him down. His demoniac plan succeeded, and when the sincere affliction of the family had yielded in some degree to the grief-diminishing power of time, he led that prize to the altar, which he had perpetrated a crime most execrable to enrich.

His lovely wife he was most fervently attached to, and this very attachment gave misery to his future life; for in a short period after his marriage, he found the woman, whom he had supposed loved him with the tenderest affection, moping and melancholy; her affection chilled; and even often betraying the appearance of recoiling horror at his approach: nor could he, by the most earnest and persevering intreaties, ever obtain a knowledge of the

cause, until a few moments prior to her death, when she declared to him the dreadful truth, and exhorted him in that awful season to repentance.

This unfortunate young woman, in the first visit she paid at Avondale-priory, after her marriage, was doomed to hear the husband she adored declare himself, in his agitated sleep, the murderer of her brother.

Her suspicions thus direfully awakened, the appalled wife was led to agonizing observation of her husband. Whenever her brother was mentioned, unexpectedly, before him, his blanched countenance, his emotion on beholding Lord Montalvan's picture, and his trembling dismay, when one evening she with difficulty had persuaded him to walk with her, upon the margin of that fatal lake, and that a swan suddenly arose from the water upon the bank, all combined to stamp the torture of conviction upon her anguished mind This was a secret in which she could have no participator; and from henceforth in the chilled centre of her heart was it to be chained in silence, and the beloved of her

bosom, the husband of her choice, and in time, the father of her numerous children, stood confest to her as a murderer, the murderer of her beloved brother. From this moment of fatal conviction, the blow was struck that ruined her health, and in time, though slowly, surely aided by the premature death of nine lovely and promising children, either by calamitous accidents, or the most painful maladies, led her broken-hearted to the grave; and the still adoring husband, bereft of all his beloved offspring, was now left a solitary mourner, with the agonizing knowledge that his wife (to whom it had ever been his ardent wish and anxious care to appear in the most amiable form) had recoiled from him, in full assurance of his having murdered the companion of her youth, the brother of her heart.

Lord Glenbrook had succeeded so well in removing Lord Montalvan, without awakening suspicion, (as he imagined) that his insatiate avarice, still increasing in turpitude, led him on to wish for the death of the amiable, young, and lovely sister; but

no favourable opportunity had ever appeared to him, until after her elopement with Colonel De Clifford had taken place, when his wits and wickedness were in prompt commotion to project the means for her destruction, before any heir should spring from her marriage to defeat his avaricious, diabolical purposes.

Lord Ashgrove held so exalted a place in the estimation of the Duke of Avondale, that of all mankind he was the one his heart would have elected to be the husband of his Adelaide; then most severe was his disappointment, at the unexpected choice she made for herself, when the misrepresentations of the subtle Lord Glenbrook, relative to De Clifford, intimating that his father, Lord Castlehaven, had too just reasons for discarding him from his favour; and asserting, that by the most flagrant ingratitude he had succeeded in luring the affections of Lady Adelaide from his unsuspecting, confiding friend, whose generosity of soul, and zeal for his still adored Adelaide's happiness, now led to plead for Colonel De Clifford, and gloss

over and conceal his perfidy, irritated the duke still further; and at length, working upon quick feelings, urged him on to adopt the advice of Lord Glenbrook, for breaking the marriage, and confining Lady Adelaide until her unworthy choice was forgotten by her; and even the unpleasant situation he should throw his daughter into, in the eye of the world, by annulling this union, appeared to the exasperated father an inconsiderable evil, compared to that of entrusting her happiness to the care of so worthless a being as he now firmly believed De Clifford to be; and to Lord Glenbrook he confided the whole management of this arduous and distressing business, and then fell ill of a nervous fever, brought on by the agitation of his mind, and for several weeks he was totally incapable of acting, or of being consulted.

This vile and specious hypocrite, Lord Glenbrook, had too well arranged his plans; and through good policy hastened to put them into execution, before the restoration of the duke to health, and the full vigour of his mind, which he doubted not would cause

in him a total change of sentiment; although he had effectually prevented his grace's receiving any of the numerous letters his daughter addressed to him since her elopement, and continued his irritation and displeasure against her by this apparent carelessness of his forgiveness, and by many calumnies relative to the ease with which she and De Clifford seemed to think of her father's resentment and consequent illness; and this dire belief of this want of affection, in his adored child, increased his malady, impeded his recovery, and strengthened his indignation against her.

There was in one of the western isles of Scotland the ruins of an ancient castle, or Danish fortress, which from some very distant relative of Lord Glenbrook's mother's he inherited. His property in Scotland was so trifling, that he had never visited that country, and few people knew he had heritage there; these circumstances considered, he believed this fortress the most judicious place he could fix upon for the confinement of Lady Adelaide, and for the performance of a diabolical project; since to this prison the

researches of her husband could discover no clue to find her; but for the completion of his atrocious purpose, it was necessary that he should have a trusty agent, and he was not slow in electing one.

Ferdinand Stukely, son to the woman who had suckled Lord Glenbrook, had been bred up entirely by his lordship's anxious parents with him as a companion, and stimulator to emulation and exertion. By his patron, Ferdinand was intended for the church; but from some misdemeanours of a serious nature at college, he was expelled the university he belonged to; and in consequence fell so entirely under the displeasure of his patron, that from that moment he not only withdrew his protection from him, but every pecuniary assistance.

Thus utterly discarded, this young pupil of dissipation went to the gaming-table, to acquire means to defray those expences most congenial to his inclinations. Many frauds he committed, and many vicissitudes encountered, until at length a woman with whom he lodged, the formidable Barbara, then in extensive practice, as an *accoucheuse*,

redeemed him from a spunging-house, and while under the influence of gratitude, he married her. From some misconduct of hers, in a respectable family where she had been long employed, her character fell under suspicion, and her practice rapidly declined.

In this situation of fast approaching poverty were Mr. and Mrs. Stukely, when Lord Glenbrook assailed the husband's humanity, and found no great difficulty in bribing him to become an agent, even in murder.

De Clifford, fearing the validity of a Gretna-Green marriage might in future be disputed to the disadvantage of Lady Adelaide's offspring, (should the duke, by not promptly forgiving his daughter, admit of her marrying with his consent, and all legal forms) immediately after Mr. Vulcan had earned his fee, repaired to an obscure village in Cumberland, where, after a month's residence, he gave into the parish-church the banns of marriage between Frederick De Clifford and Julia Adelaide Montrose. The banns were duly published, and in the same church he was legally and incontrovertibly united to his adored Adelaide.

The obscurity of the village they had retired to, with the precautions De Clifford had taken to elude pursuit; and by having all his letters pass through the hands of Lord Ashgrove, had for rather more than two months defeated the researches of Lord Glenbrook's emissaries. At length, however, they were discovered, and the unfortunate Adelaide torn from her adoring, distracted husband, who, not expecting such an outrage as that, had been unprepared for it; and his almost phrensied resistance, aided by his attached servant, Crofts, availed nothing against the armed host sent to drag her from her happiness.

To this Danish fortress in the Hebrides she was secretly conveyed, where it was the intention of Lord Glenbrook to have her assassinated as she slept—her chamber then to be set in flames—so that her father, her husband, and the world, might suppose it was by that catastrophe she perished.

It was scarcely possible for a young man, wedded to a most disagreeable woman, considerably older than himself, to be inclosed for many weeks in a gloomy fortress, con-

fined to the society of this wife, and the young, beautiful, fascinating, and unfortunate Lady Adelaide, and not to feel powerful admiration for the latter, which awakened his interest for her, and finally led him on to love. It had been the intention of Lord Glenbrook, that this direful deed was not to be perpetrated for some time after Lady Adelaide's concealment in the fortress, lest it should awaken suspicion; but upon the Duke of Avondale expressing his determination of going to the Hebrides, to see his child, for whom all his fond partiality was now forcibly pleading, Lord Glenbrook, in alarm, dispatched the ruthless mandate for the murder of this amiable young woman, in about six weeks after her arrival in the Hebrides.

This mandate was direful to the enamoured Ferdinand; but what could he do? He had received the bribe, disposed of some part of it; and his most solemn oath had been given, that he would perpetrate the barbarous deed. In a state of mind almost amounting to distraction, he entered the chamber of the sleeping Adelaide, who had wept herself into that

state of temporary insensibility; twice he made the ruthless attempt to bereave her of life, but the beauty and innocence of her aspect restrained his hand; and in the moment of his recoiling from his second sanguinary effort, Lady Adelaide awoke.

Ferdinand now told this dismayed victim of cruelty his mission; shewed to her the order for her death, and informed her of the train of fire by which she was surrounded. She saw indeed the mandate from Lord Glenbrook, beheld the danger, and smelt the already commencing conflagration; for that was Barbara's department, and she had been rapid in her obedience: the trembling Adelaide therefore had no time to hesitate, the alternative presented to her was instant death, or to receive life on the hard terms of binding herself by a solemn oath to live in obscurity, and never by any means directly or indirectly to make, or cause to be made known, her existence to her husband, father, or any other person or persons, unless the death of Lord Glenbrook, or the favour of Ferdinand, should take off the interdict.

Lord Glenbrook might die, or Ferdinand be won to cancel her oath; therefore Lady Adelaide cherished the fond hope, that in time she might be restored to her husband and her father; but any sacrifice of her own earthly happiness she would have made, to save an unborn innocent. She took the oath administered to her, and her life was spared.

The story of the fire, with the direful catastrophe of Lady Adelaide's perishing in the flames, Ferdinand sent off express to the execrable Lord Glenbrook. The almost distracted father sent down his chaplain, with other persons, to search the chamber of his child, (to which, and the adjoining apartments, the conflagration had been confined, to give probability to the suggestion, that she herself had caused the accident) to find, if possible, her ashes, and bring them in an urn to him. The heart-rived De Clifford, attended by the scarcely less afflicted Lord Ashgrove, made the same agonizing search for the same purpose, in which they could not of course succeed; but every thing was so pulverized, that no suspicion was awakened, and

during these mournful researches of despair, the unfortunate Adelaide (even knowing that her husband and his friend were treading upon the ground that covered her) was confined in a stone chamber belonging to the fortress, in the bowels of the earth.

The death of Lady Adelaide, now firmly believed by all who fondly adored her, she was completely in the power of the unprincipled wretches her ruthless destiny placed her with; ill treated by the wife, and exposed to the insulting declarations of the husband's love. The repelling dignity of her conduct awed him into respect, even in these declarations; but fear of his wife still more enforced his propriety of conduct.

We do not wish to wound the feelings of our readers, by any attempt at describing the mental misery Lady Adelaide endured, cut off thus direfully from all those on whom her affections rested; and had it not been for the pure and steady flame of piety that glowed within her heart, her fortitude must have proved insufficient to sustain her through so heart-rending a trial; and more particularly as the time approached, in which the

kindness and attention of friends were so essential. However, Providence supported her through all, and inspired Barbara with the wish, as she had the power, to take every possible care of her in her confinement; for in little less than eight months after the unfortunate Lady Adelaide had been torn from her wretched husband, our heroine was born a prisoner in the Hebrides.

Barbara had discovered great displeasure and discontent at the life of Lady Adelaide being spared, for how was she to be concealed when they quitted the fortress, where they were only to remain until Lord Glenbrook could sell the estate upon which it stood, and which he was all anxiety now to part with? This same consideration had sensibly disturbed the mind of Ferdinand, and had induced him, in defiance of his love of dissipation, when he quitted the fortress, (which he did about six weeks prior to the birth of our heroine) to remove to a lonely cottage, attended by one male and one female domestic, in the most unfrequented part of the Isle of Jona (anciently Iona) and where Lady Adelaide passed for the

daughter of Barbara, by a former marriage; but at length the worldly, and ever self-interested Barbara, conceived that it would be more for her own and Ferdinand's advantage, to restore their prisoner to her husband, with whom they could make their own terms; and by exposing through their evidence the villainy of Lord Glenbrook, and restoring her to her father (whom Barbara knew was suffering the most poignant affliction at the supposed loss of his child) obtain from him also, as well as De Clifford, protection and immense rewards.

Fortunately, actuated by this project, Barbara changed her conduct to Lady Adelaide, and took infinite care of her and her babe, during the time they most required it; but not all her rhetoric, or her violence, could prevail upon Ferdinand to betray Lord Glenbrook, or restore Lady Adelaide to her husband. In their now frequent altercations upon the subject, the wary and penetrating woman discovered that love for his beautiful prisoner caused his determination not to part with her. Though terrible was this tempest of rage and jea-

lousy that convulsed her mind upon this most unexpected discovery, she yet had sufficient power over herself to conceal her feelings, that she might the more securely wreak her vengeance upon her husband, by depriving him for ever of this object of his adoration, whom she well observed and found recoiled from Ferdinand's love, beholding him with horror, contempt, and detestation.

And now Barbara (like a true woman, resolved upon vengeance) thought not of consequences; and in the execution of revenge, reflected not upon any future evil which might recoil upon herself. She now therefore pretended great friendship for Lady Adelaide, promising to effect her escape, provided she kept her intentions a profound secret from Ferdinand, and entered into a written engagement for amply rewarding Barbara, the moment it should be in her power.

Lady Adelaide readily and joyfully acceded to all Barbara's propositions, even though enlarged from her prison she should (whilst bound by her oath to Ferdinand)

be as an outcast upon the face of the earth, not daring to claim kindred with, or the recognition of any one; and destitute of the means of subsistence, how was she to maintain her adored babe and herself?—"How! why He that doth the ravens feed, and providently caters for the sparrow," she trusted would provide for them; yet she was willing to encounter any peril or adversity to get from beneath the same roof with Ferdinand; and as she was under no sacred restriction to conceal her child from its father, she firmly resolved, the moment she performed her duty in the sustenance of her infant, to sacrifice every selfish, maternal feeling, and send her little babe to De Clifford, with the attestation of her birth signed by Barbara, the female domestic, and an old Hebridean woman, who were all present at the moment—an attestation Barbara with hope of recompence drew out and gave her.

Lady Adelaide had received from De Clifford a fifty pound bank note for some domestic expences, the morning of the day she was torn from him; this she still had,

and about twelve pounds beside, with her diamond hoop-ring, and a diamond locket of value. This property Ferdinand first left in her possession, thinking all would quietly be his when she was no more; afterwards his passion for her induced his forbidding his rapacious wife taking it, and now Barbara found this property necessary to defray the expences of Lady Adelaide's journey to De Clifford, to whom she doubted not she would promptly hasten, betray the villainy of Lord Glenbrook, and soon amply reward her services.

From its being supposed in Jona that Lady Adelaide was the daughter of Barbara, the plausible story invented by the latter was implicitly believed by a shrewd and honest Hebridean, to whom she imparted that distress which she said was breaking her heart. She acknowledged to honest Donald, that her young and profligate husband had fallen in love with her daughter, and so took every step for preventing the poor girl from going to her husband, who was abroad; and that this illicit passion of his made her and her poor girl (who was a

dutiful child to her, and firmly attached to her own husband) extremely wretched. In short, the wily Barbara so worked upon the piety and good-nature of the Hebridean, that he agreed to take Lady Adelaide and her child out of the island, without the knowledge of Ferdinand, and convey her safely to London, for the expences of his journey being paid, and five guineas reward to make him comfortable upon his return.

CHAPTER XV.

Donald, faithful to his word, safely conducted Lady Adelaide and her babe to London. Luckily her ladyship recollected the address of Mrs. Crofts, wife to her Frederick's attached valet. Mrs. Crofts she knew had never seen her, and also knew she let lodgings. To the house of this woman therefore she immediately drove upon her arrival in London, and not without some difficulty, from want of a recommendation, procured an apartment in the house of Mrs. Crofts, who "somehow," she said, "had taken a vast fancy to the sweet young lady, her lovely infant, and her honest looking domestic."

Lady Adelaide, through the assistance of Mrs. Crofts, disposed of her ring and locket for three hundred pounds; and faithful Donald had contrived that her journey and his own should be so perfectly economical, that for this honesty, and the great

care he had taken of her, she doubled his reward, and sent by him privately to Barbara many presents out of her little store, which she thought would please her.

From Mrs. Crofts Lady Adelaide soon learned (what she panted to know) where De Clifford was. This poor woman loved talking, and informed her, "that her husband was at Florence with his master, Colonel De Clifford, who was gone there in dreadful health, injured by his almost distracted affliction for the loss of his beautiful young wife." Lady Adelaide was sensibly affected by this intelligence, and as soon as she could command sufficient composure, informed Mrs. Crofts, "she would take any commands for her to Florence, as she was going thither the moment she could provide herself with a male and female domestic, whom she could confide in to accompany her." Mrs. Crofts soon supplied her with two very valuable ones, a faithful Swiss, and his daughter; and as soon as Lady Adelaide furnished her own long scantily provided wardrobe, and her child with necessaries (superfluities were

now out of her reach to obtain) she set out for Italy.

Lady Adelaide considering it expedient, confided to her Swiss, that she was far from affluent; that she had disobliged her friends by her marriage; that she had lost her husband, and, cut off from all her friends, she was going abroad to benefit her health, if possible, for the sake of her poor babe. And now, deeply interested for her, this faithful Swiss arranged her whole journey as economically as the delicate state of her health would admit of; for long sufferings of mental anguish, and beginning her fatiguing, arduous journey, before she was perfectly recovered from her temporary confinement, both combined in materially injuring her before uninterrupted state of health.—They arrived safely, and as expeditiously as possible, in Provence; and at Nice they embarked for Leghorn, to which port they had a quick and tolerably comfortable passage.

And now, with eager speed, Lady Adelaide proceeded to Florence, where Francois, her careful Swiss, procured her convenient lodging, and with agonizing anxiety she sent him

to inquire for Colonel De Clifford, to deliver a letter and parcel from Mrs. Crofts to her husband. The dwelling of Colonel De Clifford was easily traced, and the important trust delivered.—A trust important indeed to Lady Adelaide, as by it she had a fair pretext for immediately inquiring out her adored Frederick.

The agitation of the unfortunate Adelaide's mind at this period baffles our feeble attempts to describe. She was now actually in the same city with her husband, and yet she was solemnly bound to conceal her existence from him, as she valued her eternal salvation, unless the dreadful interdict was removed, either by the death of Lord Glenbrook, or by the permission of Ferdinand. The first was an uncertain expectation, and of the latter she cherished no hope; yet the consolations which drew her to Florence she could enjoy. She here breathed the same air her Frederick did; could learn accounts every day of his health; and oh! rapture! perhaps from some secure concealment, catch even one look at him; and here also she was upon the spot to cause his child to

be delivered to him, when she had performed the only duty by her which fate seemed to promise allowing her to fulfil, as from the moment Barbara's projects were known to her, her magnanimous heart had rigidly taught itself to consider her precious babe as a sacred trust, she had in care for a few months for De Clifford; never once reflecting, that to restore her child to its father would be a violation of her oath, since the birth of this child, after the supposed death of its mother, must cause inquiry, implicate the Stukely's, and ultimately lead to a discovery. However, pitying fate decreed not that Lady Adelaide was by that means to be taught her want of fore-sight, or doomed for her remaining life, the misery she with meek submission sorrowfully expected.

Crofts was not at home when Francois left the packets for him, but as in his wife's letter, she said, "the bearer of it would see her after she sealed her letter, and could therefore give him the latest accounts of her, and his children," the moment he read it, he set out for the lodging of Lady Adelaide (now calling herself Mrs. Rosemont) in quest of

Francois, who had left his address, and he had been nearly an hour with the Swiss, questioning him about his wife and children, when Lady Adelaide crossed the court with our heroine in her arms, whom she was going to put to sleep.—Crofts saw her, and although pitiably altered since she had been torn from happiness in Cumberland, he knew her, and in the delirium of his astonishment, darted through the window after her. She had arrived in her chamber, had laid the babe on her bed, and was speaking to Antonietta, when without ceremony he rushed in after her, and her voice was conviction.

"Gracious Providence! it is my lady!" he wildly articulated, and franticly rushed out of the house. Lady Adelaide saw him, heard him, and instantly fell senseless to the ground.

Crofts, now totally bereft of every idea, but that of conveying happiness to his wretched master, flew to the house of Mrs. St. Clair, where his master dined. Miss St. Clair had long been most deeply in love with Colonel De Clifford, and meeting him at Florence, a supposed widower, she resolved to make him her captive, and had, during the few months

he had now been there, been indefatigably levelling her whole artillery of charms against his heart, whilst her fond and subtle mother aided those attacks, by making her house as pleasing to De Clifford as it was now possible to make any house to him, while he, to indulge in the sad consolation of talking of his Adelaide, spent most of his time with the beautiful Ismena; but all her sweet alluring smiles with as much effect might have been played off against a blind man, her tender sighs heaved in the presence of a deaf one, as De Clifford, for on the memory of his Adelaide his very soul was riveted.

Crofts suddenly burst upon the sight of his astonished master, as he was sitting at the desert at Mrs. St. Clair's.—The trembling agitation of this faithful servant alarmed him with apprehension of he knew not what.

"Oh! I have seen her!" Crofts instantly exclaimed, panting for breath. "I have seen her! My lady! my dear Lady Adelaide is in Florence! G—d is merciful, my master!"

De Clifford did not swoon, but his senses as completely forsook their boundaries as any unfortunate maniac's had ever done.—

Franticly he started from his chair, which Crofts supposing, spoke an order to him, to conduct him to Lady Adelaide: he ran back to her lodgings as fleet as the wind, and De Clifford, now totally incapable of perception, instinctively following him; nor did he recover his thus violently routed reason, until, attracted on by Crofts, he beheld his real identical Adelaide, then on her bed, in the semblance of death, her two faithful domestics striving by every means to recal her to life.

The transport of meeting after such a parting sets description at defiance, and the almost joy-maddened De Clifford found himself not only blessed with his adored wife, but with a lovely child.

The happiness of Lady Adelaide was however bitterly alloyed, by the dreadful fear of her having (though so unintentionally on her part, this discovery of her existence had been made) infringed her sacred oath; but now, restored to her husband, she found it necessary to disclose to him all the circumstances of her direful estrangement from him, when to calm her agonising fears and distress relative to the violation of her compact with

Ferdinand, he now pledged himself to consider her oath as binding to him as to herself, and to render secrecy the more certain, he would immediately sell out of the army, and on the money arising from the sale of his commission, they would live in obscurity abroad, and never make her existence known to her father, or any one further, until her oath was cancelled, which, however, he would not cease to strive by offers of considerable bribes to Ferdinand, to win him into the removal of the terrible interdict, which De Clifford doubted not, now that Lady Adelaide was removed from his power, of soon persuading him into.

This unexpected joy, after such an age of agonising grief, proved too much for the frame of De Clifford to sustain; and the very day succeeding the miraculous restoration of his Adelaide, he fell ill of a dangerous fever, and for many weeks his afflicted wife had to attend in ardent solicitude his bed of sickness. At length he recovered, and found his tenderly adored Adelaide the spectre only of her former beauteous self.

When De Clifford and Lady Adelaide

formed the flattering idea of being able to effect the concealment of her existence, as long as it should prove necessary, they thought not, in their eager arrangements for happiness, of any other participator in the secret, but Crofts being near them; but that attached domestic, in the delirium of his joy, had betrayed it to the wily Mrs. St. Clair, and her little less artful daughter; it therefore became necessary to confide entirely in them, to obtain their solemn promise, of inviolable secrecy. A promise, Mrs. St. Clair readily gave, as still mining for the future happiness of her love-languishing daughter, she resolved to secure the powerful gratitude of De Clifford, by every apparent kindness to him and Lady Adelaide, whom she believed death had only spared to torture a second time the heart of her husband, by inflicting upon him the anguished misery of a second time lamenting her.

Mrs. St. Clair augured too truly. The long hopeless anguish of Lady Adelaide's heart, her undertaking so long, anxious, and ill provided a journey before her strength was

equal to it; her joy at meeting her tenderly adored husband; her fears of losing him; her fatigue in nursing him, and suckling her child, all united to the trembling apprehensions her upright mind endured, of her having infringed her oath in seeking the country which De Clifford inhabited; apprehensions, which upbraiding letters, accusing her of the violation of her oath, supposed to come from Ferdinand, (in answer to De Clifford's offers of rewards for freeing Lady Adelaide from the compact made under the dominion of bodily fear, and which therefore nothing but her own conscientious feelings could lead her to consider sacred) in mining her once most healthy constitution; and at length a letter to Lady Adelaide herself, with Ferdinand's signature, importing, "that in vengeance for her breach of faith, he was determined to take the life of her husband, who was to be henceforward at the mercy of a secret assassin, who only awaited his mandate to seal his doom," gave the final blow to her health. This constant and direful terror, from the belief, that each passing moment

might prove the last of her adored husband, swiftly augmented the low fever that was consuming her.

The distracted De Clifford now took her from place to place, until they had visited every salubrious spot in Italy, still with the vain hope, that new air and new physicians might yet save her; and striving with all the eloquence of love to dispel those fears for his life, so cruelly awakened, which he firmly believed were the mere threats of jealousy and malice.

The subtle Mrs. St. Clair, and her alluring daughter, were still the kind, attentive companions and nurses of Lady Adelaide, in her excursions through the south of Italy. Mrs. St. Clair's sister had been the respected governess of Lady Adelaide, and the beautiful Ismena had been chiefly educated with her, so that as the amiable Adelaide was fervently attached to Ismena, she believed the attachment mutual, and received her kind attention, as the tribute of sincere friendship. In these excursions Lady Adelaide discovered Ismena's love for De Clifford; for it was the plan of Mrs. St. Clair, that she should; and when the

drooping Adelaide, now fully aware of her approaching dissolution, spoke of that discovery to Mrs. St. Clair, the wily woman most artfully suggested to her a project for the security of her child from the knowledge of the vindictive Ferdinand, and sanguinary Lord Glenbrook, until more propitious times, by a marriage between De Clifford and Ismena, when, as time went on, and they could steal from the age of the little Julia, they might pass her for the offspring of De Clifford's second marriage, until the moment of safety should arrive to acknowledge the fact.

Lady Adelaide, trembling for the security of her husband and her child, and full of tender anxiety for the happiness of her Frederick, eagerly grasped at this project. She firmly believed Ismena possessed of every perfection under heaven; that she would therefore in time prove consolation to De Clifford, and to her child an affectionate mother. Full of these delusive hopes, Lady Adelaide gently disclosed them to her heart-rived husband, who heard her thus talk of her own approaching death with grief unutterable, heard her recommend a successor

with recoiling horror, and when the anguish of his heart permitted articulation, he told her in bitterest tears of anguished affection, "he never would wed again; he never could love another."

"So I would now have you firmly believe," said the sensibly affected dying Adelaide; "but I would also have time, the kind assuager of every grief, convince you that you are mistaken. I wish you *now* to think no second attachment can ever supersede that you feel for me; but I yet more ardently wish you in time to find consolation, and still be happy. How often have I heard you say, my Frederick, 'that next to Lady Delamore and myself, Ismena was the most fascinating woman you had ever met with.' Narrowly you escaped from being for ever wretched by the fascinations of the lovely, interesting sister of Ashgrove. My unfortunate fascinations have succeeded too completely in making misery for you, from the hour we met, until long after we part, (I fear me); then let the third you rank in fascination, prove the first in promoting and constituting that happiness so dreadfully in arrear to you."

"For the completion of this project, which she believed must secure the safety of her husband and her child, promote the happiness of the former, and give a tender mother to the latter, the fast declining Adelaide now for ever pleaded."

But the heart-broken De Clifford resolutely, yet tenderly, most tenderly, refuted the arguments of his idolised wife in favour of this plan, her mind so infatuatedly clung to; but as with increasing anguish of his tortured soul, he saw the fast approaching inevitability of her fate, and his doom to wretchedness, he could no longer bear to afflict her by such resolute negatives to her project; and to lull her into a belief, that time might win him to compliance, became his aim to pacify her; but one evening as she leaned upon his arm, to take with faltering steps a little walk up and down her chamber, she stopped to observe the beauties of the setting sun from her window. All that her wistful eyes now beheld was in congeniality with the sublimation of her own soul; and as she gazed in pious awe upon the works of Him, into

whose presence she was shortly to be summoned; and feeling how very shortly it must be, she unconsciously articulated, as the grand orb of day sunk in all its splendour beneath the horizon,

"But *thou* shalt rise to-morrow!"

The tone in which she uttered this was too expressive to be misconceived by her wretched husband, and it was received in his heart by an universal shiver. Adelaide felt its vibration; she well conceived what his feelings were in that moment: and in that moment she sunk at his feet, and as the last request she should ever have power to make, she urged the earnest wish of her heart; and as her *last* request, De Clifford could not deny it, but made her in death his fate, as she had been in life. Lady Adelaide was mistaken; she lived another, and another day, and she conveyed the falteringly articulated assent of the heart-chilled De Clifford for leading Ismena to the altar to Mrs. St. Clair.

De Clifford now felt he had yielded to his Adelaide's wishes, every gleam of comfort life had power to give him, when Ade-

laide should leave him; but gladly would he have parted with life itself to give her one moment's gratification. Every thing therefore she now requested of him was readily acceded to. Ferdinand was to be apprized of her dissolution, (immediately after it should take place) and assured by the hand of De Clifford, the claims of the little Julia should never be made to her grandfather without his permission. This Adelaide believed would effect the security of her Frederick and her child; and it gave her exhausted heart the last earthly consolation it had the power of receiving.

Upon the heart of the amiable unfortunate De Clifford too soon was inflicted its mortal wound; and he became a second time a wretched mourner for his Adelaide. This beauteous flower "nipped by an untimely frost," was in her nineteenth year interred near the cottage, her now, for ever miserable husband, had purchased (when the sale of his commission had been effected) for their secret residence in a most beautifully secluded spot, upon the banks of the Arno; and there, with all that re-

mained to him of happiness, he would have confined himself, but for the suggestions of Mrs. St. Clair. To fulfil the dying request of his Adelaide, he was to wed Ismena, for whose child the infant Julia was to pass. To give credit to this, without attaching suspicion to the fame of Ismena, it was necessary to remove for some time from the place appointed for their future residence.

Mrs. St. Clair had infinitely too good a head for plotting not to arrange every matter with effect. The two faithful Swiss domestics were dismissed. To *Ninon* the care of the infant Julia intirely fell, and the wretched De Clifford, his adored cherub (now doubly dear to him) as being all that was left of his Adelaide to comfort him, attended by the wary St. Clair's, and his attached Crofts, now wandered about the Continent, to every spot, where they were unknown, in Switzerland, France and Germany, making no long stay any where, lest they should attract notice, and create inquiry, until it became possible for the apparent age of our heroine to admit of the supposition, that she was child to Ismena, whom Mrs. St. Clair now an-

nounced to all her friends had been wife to Colonel De Clifford many months before she really was; so at length, as the fine healthy thriving Julia's growth allowed of it, by the manœuvring of Mrs. St. Clair, ten months were deducted from her age, and she was considered a prodigy for size and understanding by the few who were permitted to see her in her early years; so that our heroine had nearly completed her seventeenth year, not just entered upon it, when she was introduced to our readers, as Mr. Goodwin stated in the letter, he supposed, was for the perusal of Lady Delamore.

How this second and compulsatory marriage of the amiable, unfortunate De Clifford, turned out, our reader already has learned from our heroine's narrative to Lord Ashgrove. Our present circumscribed limits will not admit of our now following him through all the wretchedness of his affliction; but how poignant that affliction was, its effects most forcibly told. The only power which time acquired over his sorrow was to increase it. Tenderness for his Adelaide was a treasure his adoring heart could never part with, and

from the moment he lost her, his thoughts were fixed on her in heaven, and he died at length, assuredly of no malady, but cherished grief.

Having long discovered the real disposition of Mrs. St. Clair, and his second wife (who, from the moment it was decreed must be his Adelaide's successor, became an object of detestation to him), and their hatred to his adored babe, he dreaded every misery for her, both here and hereafter, if left in the protection of these most direful women, whom too late he found were confirmed atheists. To save his child from wretchedness and perdition, he determined to infringe his solemn promise to her sainted mother, by addressing once more a letter to his ever beloved friend Lord Ashgrove, and in fullest confidence, related to him, "every circumstance of his child's birth; entreated his protection for the helpless daughter of Adelaide; and informed him, that in the hands of his faithful domestic Crofts he would leave the testimonies of his child's birth, to be delivered to him on his demanding them." This most energetic and affecting letter, and narrative of extraordinary

and melancholy facts, Colonel De Clifford confided to the care of an English gentleman, returning to his native country, who promised to deliver it into Lord Ashgrove's own hands, or in case of his absence from England, into Lady Delamore's, for him, but that promise was not fulfilled. The ship in which this unfortunate gentleman embarked foundered at sea, and every soul on board perished.

But of this dreadful catastrophe, De Clifford remained uninformed; and he died in full conviction, that his child's happiness was secured in the protection of Lord Ashgrove.

To preserve them for his little Julia, the unfortunate De Clifford gave to the care of Crofts the certificate of his marriage, the attestation of his child's birth, and a long and interesting narrative, written by Lady Adelaide's own hand, addressed to her father, and intended by her to be delivered to him, when Ferdinand should remove the interdict, for Julia's being presented to her grandfather; this narrative commencing from the time she was dragged from her adored husband, to imprisonment in the Hebrides, was continued until the day preceding her

death, when, in the most affecting manner, she concluded her mournful history, "recommending her husband and child to the protection and affection of her father, and announcing the intended second marriage of her adored Frederick, as a project of her own, and solely complied with, to give peace to her last moments;" and this sad journal, which De Clifford now confided to the discretion of his friend, was inclosed in a packet for Lord Ashgrove, while for Julia herself, he gave to the especial care of Crofts (and not to be delivered to her until she was of an age likely to appreciate them) the portrait of himself and Lady Adelaide.

CHAPTER XVI.

All that remained of the amiable, unfortunate De Clifford, had scarcely been consigned to its parent earth, when Mrs. St. Clair dismissed the faithful, afflicted Crofts, who now, in well-founded alarm, lest the lovely orphan of his lamented master and lady should experience any long continuation of the unkindness and neglect of Mrs. De Clifford, and her diabolical mother, hastened his departure from Italy, embarking in the very first ship that sailed for England, meaning to proceed with the utmost expedition to whatever spot of the globe Lord Ashgrove might be in; and by recounting all the unkindness his dear master's babe had suffered since deprived of her fond father, and which she was still exposed to, stimulate his lordship to quicker exertions in extricating her from her misery. Crofts arrived in the British channel,

where he was instantly pressed, nor permitted to land, or (in consequence of the violent efforts of resistance he made) suffered to hold communication with any one; but in close confinement, quitted once more his native land, and sailed in a frigate to the East Indies, where for four years he was stationed, and not daring to confide in any one the important secrets his ever-lamented master had intrusted to his care; the agitation and distress of his mind, fearing that he might never be permitted to return to England to execute the sacred commission, were pitiable in the extreme; however, all he could do for the security of this important trust he lost no time in performing: he made a large packet of all, directed to Lord Ashgrove, and giving them to his captain as papers of consequence belonging to his late master, entreated him by every thing sacred to have them delivered, as directed, should he himself die, or any thing occur to prevent his return to England; while to Lord Ashgrove himself he wrote to tell him where his master's papers were, but entrusted to care-

less hands; that letter also never reached his lordship.

At the termination of four years station in the Indian Ocean, &c. the frigate in which Crofts still served sailed for Europe, with orders to join a fleet in the Mediterranean. Crofts, from his long series of orderly conduct, obtained leave to go on shore at Leghorn, for the purpose of visiting the banks of the Arno, to drop his genuine tears of sorrow once more upon the turf which covered his beloved master and Lady Adelaide; and to obtain all the intelligence he possibly could of his dear little Miss Julia. From Pietro he had the grief to learn that our heroine was still under the protection of Mrs. St. Clair, (Mrs. De Clifford being no more,) and had never to his knowledge been claimed by any one, but was still neglected and ill treated. Crofts naturally supposed the same unkindness which had led Lord Ashgrove not to answer for such a length of time any of his once-loved friend's letters, operated still, and led him on to the cruelty of disregarding the dying request of his master, and

full of new projects to serve his master's child, he quitted the banks of the Arno, hastened to Santa Celestina, where Pietro informed him Julia was, obtained an interview with the astonished, agitated, and overjoyed girl, (who well remembered him,) and gave her the portraits of her parents, recommending her to keep them secret from Mrs. St. Clair; and finding she knew nothing of her family secrets, he prudently forbore to give her any intimation of them.

The subtle Mrs. St. Clair had undertaken to rear our heroine as the child of her Ismena, for even a more forcible motive than that of promoting her daughter's happiness with De Clifford. Julia she considered as an exhaustless treasure, in possessing which she could draw large subsidies from the coffers of Lord Glenbrook. She accordingly after the death of De Clifford announced the existence of a child of Lady Adelaide's in a letter to Lord Glenbrook, and offered for a large reward to suppress her claims to the inheritance of her mother.

Immediately upon receipt of this most

unexpected letter, the alarmed Lord Glenbrook hastened to Italy, and had an interview with Mrs. St. Clair, who having not in her possession any one proof of our heroine's birth, the wily Lord Glenbrook lost his terrors, resumed his self-possession, affected to treat all as a malicious fabrication of De Clifford's; but, "to recompense her for not propagating a story that must attach censure to his fair fame, he had no objection to settle a small annuity upon her," he said.

Mrs. St. Clair, now painfully convinced, that by her possessing no vouchers of Julia's birth, his lordship had nothing to fear from her, or she to hope from him, gladly accepted even the small annuity; and when that was finally arranged, Lord Glenbrook craftily informed her, "that should she be deprived of the allowance she had for the maintenance of her grand-daughter by the child's death, he would, through kindness, double her annuity."

Mrs. St. Clair perfectly understood his meaning: but, diabolical as she was, she still recoiled from the idea of murder; be-

side, the interest of Julia's fortune was more than the promised addition; and both interest and principal she considered at her sole disposal, as no guardian had claimed her little charge; and that no will of De Clifford's had been found. But although resolved the child should live as long as nature and chance ordained; and with a hope too of her still proving the means of obtaining rewards for silence from the iniquitous Lord Glenbrook; yet still was her enmity to the unoffending babe augmented by this disappointment; who before had, in addition to the jealousy she had awakened by her father's affections, all centring in her after the death of his Adelaide, the inheritance of Mrs. St. Clair's hatred to De Clifford himself, which his never to be overcome indifference to, and in defiance of his natural urbanity and gentleness of manners, his ill-concealed abhorrence of her beautiful Ismena inspired; and which his having contrived to secrete every paper relative to the birth of Julia, only leaving for her inspection Ismena's marriage-settlement, (which gave half of his property to Mrs.

De Clifford during her life, to revert to his child, or her heirs, after Ismena's death,) most direfully increased.

All these circumstances, united to the natural harshness and turpitude of Mrs. St. Clair's disposition, led her to treat our heroine with undeviating unkindness; but after the death of Ismena her unkindness to Julia assumed the ruthless aspect of cruelty; and still this diabolical enmity led her on to neglect all her mental acquirements, to add to her life's misery by withholding from her the sunshine of the mind; while every showy accomplishment was strictly attended to, and her application enforced even by the exercise of every inhumanity, for the vile purpose of adding their attractions to her exquisite beauty, hoping that a combination of such brilliant allurements, where the mind was enfeebled by total ignorance, might ultimately lead the child of De Clifford to every misery which vice could yield. Under the influence of this diabolical hope, the addresses of the amiable Lord St. Orville were rejected, and Julia removed at once, with every

precaution to ensure effectual concealment from his pursuit, as an union with him promised every happiness; and it was her wish to make the child of De Clifford and Lady Adelaide for ever wretched: and for the completion of this cruel purpose she sanctioned and promoted the addresses of the unfortunate Laroche, whom she saw, immediately upon her arrival at the Hague, was wandering from the confines of perfect sanity; and knowing how direfully this dreadful hereditary malady had evinced itself in his family, felt convinced it would inflict every misery in the mind of the susceptible Julia, to unite her to a maniac, and give her the wretchedness to know her children were all inheritors of this terrible calamity; however, as our readers already know, the elder Laroche discovered her perfidy, and turned her with ignominy from his house; and in his power it was amply to execute vengeance.

The extreme extravagance Mrs. St. Clair had practised in her own style of living after she had lost her more prudent daughter, alluring to her table and conversationes all

the *dilettanti* and needy professors of music, with her amazing expences in her mania for travelling, proved more than her finances could support, even with the additions already mentioned. De Clifford secured only four thousand pounds in the English funds of the money arising from the sale of his commission; the remainder he had remitted to Tuscany; and after the purchase of his cottage, and some other incidental expences, the residue he placed in his banker's hands at Florence, in readiness to answer the demand of Ferdinand, when he should relent. All this Mrs. St. Clair contrived, as the natural guardian of his child, to obtain; and after selling the *Capannella di Violetta,* she was compelled to borrow sums of money, from time to time, of Laroche, who being the agent of her pecuniary affairs, put both her annuities, and the interest arising from Julia's money, in the British funds, into requisition, to repay himself; and this proved the cause of the extreme poverty which attended Mrs. St. Clair's last moments; while his malice urged him to fabricate the arrest

of Mrs. St. Clair in Sussex; when our heroine's amiable forgiving disposition led her into the imprudence of listening to the advice of a pettifogging attorney, who visited the jail where Mrs. St. Clair was imprisoned, and who, taking advantage of the inexperience and benevolence of our heroine, initiated her into the secret of minors raising money upon their property, making considerably himself by the fraudulent business.

The moment Lady Adelaide's escape from his power was revealed to Ferdinand, he fell dangerously ill, and soon evinced to Barbara the violence of his passion for the beautiful Lady Adelaide, and his detestation of herself. This, by awakening the most deadly, diabolical jealousy, worked her up to vengeance upon the innocent Adelaide, who she now determined should never more know happiness. Barbara it was, who intercepting all the letters from Lady Adelaide and De Clifford to Ferdinand, (whose milkiness she apprehending might be won to their wishes) answered all the letters herself, and sent that direful

one which gave the final blow to Lady Adelaide's existence; and as her mind, as well as form, partook so powerfully of masculine energy, she wrote too in a manly style and hand, so that the authenticity of the letters she sent was never doubted by the unfortunate De Cliffords.

From the period Mrs. St. Clair announced her unexpected communications to Lord Glenbrook, his vindictive persecutions of Ferdinand commenced, while Ferdinand had no power of retaliation; for he had nothing in his possession to prove the guilt of his lordship, Barbara having in her zeal-mania, for the restoration of Lady Adelaide to her husband, given her the important letter of Lord Glenbrook, which commanded the immediate assassination of Lady Adelaide; while his lordship had, under the hand of Ferdinand, many things that must criminate that unfortunate and guilty man; and from his own, and wife's former character in society, Ferdinand very well knew that no credence would be given to their verbal testimony; but from the time Lord Glenbrook, by seeing our

heroine with Mrs. St. Clair in the vatican, had dire conviction of Lady Adelaide's escaping his sanguinary mandate, and leaving a child, (which he before had endeavoured to persuade himself into a belief was fiction,) his vindictive feelings became more poignant with his fears, and his persecutions of Ferdinand grew more serious, even threatening life itself; and as Barbara mentioned, they had for years been wandering in miserable apprehensions, with health sacrificed to eternal fears and disquietude, until they settled on the principal estate of Lord Glenbrook, which had become so obnoxious to him from its being the place of interment of his tenderly beloved offspring, that his lordship had forsaken it; and where, now, under the fictitious name of Taylor, Ferdinand carried on an extensive illicit trade, in league with a numerous band of smugglers.

Lord Westbourn, from long and early habits of intimacy with Lord Glenbrook, very well knew Ferdinand; and had often employed him in secret services of no very praise-worthy nature; and Lady Adelaide

having been imprisoned in the care of this very unprincipled man, led Lord Westbourn to suspect the fire by which he believed she had perished had been lit by other hands than that of accident :—but as her death removed one obstacle to his wife's heirs coming into the Montalvan wealth and honours, he felt no inclination to breathe his suspicions; yet once awakened, he had the eye of scrutiny upon Lord Glenbrook, who, in the anguish of his heart for the loss of his children, had, from time to time, allowed expressions to escape him which his wary friend, Lord Westbourn, noted down.

At length, Lord Westbourn saw our heroine, and the striking resemblance she bore to Lady Adelaide, and the duchess her mother, convinced him that Julia was not only the child of De Clifford, but by his first marriage; and this belief instantly implicated Lord Glenbrook and Stukely in some villainous manœuvring which he was resolved to fathom; and this *conscientious*, affectionate father, considering his daughter's share of this world's good quite suffi-

cient already, determined to possess himself of the immense property the daughter of Lady Adelaide would be entitled to upon the rapidly approaching death of the Countess of Montalvan; and that our heroine was Lady Adelaide's daughter, he had many fair reasons for believing.

Under this conviction he craftily began his attack upon Julia's heart, before any thing should transpire to call the disinterestedness of his affection in question. Ferdinand received from him a small annuity for some of his *honourable* services, and had often in his long series of distresses applied to his lordship for pecunary aid; so that Lord Westbourn knew where to trace him out, and instantly wrote to him, "offering him a large reward if he would confess to him every thing relative to the birth of Lady Adelaide De Clifford's daughter, whom he well knew she had left." Ferdinand, thrown off his guard by the affected knowledge which only sprung from suspicion of the fact, answered in that way which gave every confirmation to Lord Westbourn's belief, though without absolutely

confessing any thing. This letter, with his justly awakened apprehensions of the superior attractions of Lord St. Orville, induced him to adopt the violent measure of carrying off our heroine, when by detaining her in his power, secure from every prospect of being discovered, he could work upon her feelings of propriety in the expediency of her marriage with him taking place, to save her fair fame from condemnation.

Upon the arrival of his lordship and daughter at Valincourt abbey, they found the afflicted Duke of Avondale recovered from his indisposition, which had been one of those sudden and alarming ones which determine the fate of the sufferer in a few hours; and as his grace was recovered, and no hope of present death about him, Lord Westbourn wishing for the completion of his anxious scheme of villainy before Lord St. Orville should frustrate it, hastened to quit Valincourt abbey; *kindly* and *attentively* escorted his daughter to London, and then proceeded himself to the habitation of Stukely, full of the project of de-

priving her of her new and highly prized dignity.

Ferdinand readily came into all his lordship's schemes, promising to reveal every thing as soon as he should see Miss De Clifford; as the house of Ferdinand, from its sequestered situation, they mutually agreed should be the place of poor Julia's confinement until she bestowed her hand upon Lord Westbourn. Ferdinand still fancying, that conscience, to expiate his crimes, was solely thus leading him on to serve the child of the injured Lady Adelaide; while in fact, vengeance to his long relentless persecutor was one of his principal stimulators.

Barbara acquiesced most unwillingly; for the idea of benefiting the child of Lady Adelaide was torture to her vindictive heart; but the moment she beheld our heroine looking like her detested mother, and was convinced Lord Westbourn, from his accident, was incapable of protecting her, she formed in one instant the diabolical resolution of committing the direful murder of this innocent being.

That part of the foregoing narrative, which Ferdinand communicated, filled his auditors with the most painful emotions. The sufferings of his child, and the villainy of his unsuspected, specious son-in-law, proved almost too much for the nearly subdued spirits of the agonized parent to sustain; and had not this newly recovered treasure, this child of his adored Adelaide been near to comfort him, would most certainly have overwhelmed him; whilst the heart of the tender, susceptible Julia, bled in anguish at this horrid recital of her mother's captivity, and direful estrangement for so many months from her adoring, wretched husband, prolonging the misery of that father her infant tenderness still clung to, as if but the perfect blossom of that very hour: while, as the narrative of Ferdinand announced the restoration of Lady Adelaide to her husband; "that before his eyes death cropt the beautiful flower, but scarcely opened to full loveliness; and that she had left him a precious pledge of his wedded life to act in miniature upon the vision of his heart, as a sweet

and soothing remembrance of his Adelaide;" the afflicted duke, still unknowing the motive which impelled him to it, felt more powerful indignation than he ever before had experienced against the unfortunate De Clifford for his hasty second marriage.

The narrative of Ferdinand ended; and that the first agony of his grace's tortured feelings allowed his thoughts for one moment to stray from his murdered child, (for murdered he considered her, by the miseries inflicted on her susceptible mind by his own reprehensible harshness and credulity, and by the villainy of Lord Glenbrook,) he determined instantly to set out for Valincourt abbey, nor rest one night beneath the roof of the murderer of his child; nor could all the influence which Doctor Sydenham possessed over him, work upon him "by the prudence his very recent dangerous indisposition inspired, for his not so rashly endangering his life," to give up the resolution of immediate departure: but the moment the good doctor glanced at "the fatigue and agitation his grandchild

had encountered, requiring rest," every idea faded before her safety and comfort, and their departure was postponed until morning; but the perturbed Julia would not seek her pillow until her grandfather sent off express to Black Tower abbey a few lines from her to assure Lady Theodosia of her perfect safety under the protection of the Duke of Avondale and Doctor Sydenham, to which she added a request, that Lucy might be immediately sent with some clothes to her at Valincourt abbey.

We trust our reader is already too well acquainted with the piety of Julia De Clifford, to suppose she sought her rest without offering those heart-directed thanksgivings to the Almighty Protector of innocence for the almost miraculous escapes she had had from the machinations of Lord Westbourn, and the vengeance of the vindictive Barbara, as well as for the providential discovery of her real mother, and all its consequent blessings.

CHAPTER XVII.

NEXT morning at an early hour, or rather we ought to say at eight o'clock the same eventful morning, the Duke of Avondale, his new found treasure, and Doctor Sydenham (almost as happy as his grace at the discovery of this treasure's affinity to his friend and patron) set out for Valincourt abbey in Wiltshire, about thirty miles from Lord Glenbrook's seat.

Ferdinand Stukely, now completely in the Duke of Avondale's power, by having in his disclosures criminated himself before so many witnesses, was so bound by interest, as well as safety, to be faithful, that his grace permitted him to remain behind for a few days, to make as hasty an arrangement as possible of his affairs, prior to his removal from the estate of Lord Glenbrook, which was now expedient for him to quit.

Julia found the extensive park of Valin-

court abbey, and the grounds belonging to it, although in the sombre stile of ancient times, the most romantically beautiful she had seen in England; and the Gothic mansion itself the most magnificent she had ever entered.

"This place, my child, is your inheritance," said her agitated grandfather, "with all the honours and large possessions of the house of Montalvan, which nothing now I trust can despoil you of; but my personal property, which in itself is sufficient to make you a wealthy heiress, shall be yours. Avondale-priory, with my personal estates, go to that branch of our family, to whom the dukedom devolves at my decease, which, now I have again found my Adelaide, I shall earnestly pray may be for some little time delayed."

Julia earnestly breathed a response to this prayer from her heart, and kissed the hand of this new found parent in reverence.

"Lord Westbourn was no bad speculator," said Doctor Sydenham—"Such an heiress, so enriched by nature and fortune, would have been a prize indeed."

"A prize," replied the duke, "that no man shall have who does not merit her. As to Westbourn we will not 'break the bruised reed;' but when he has recovered from his fractures, I will write to him upon the subject of his treachery, and forbid him my presence for ever."

His grace, when he uttered "a prize that no man shall have who does not merit her," felt the hand of his grand-daughter suddenly tremble; and in her communicative countenance beheld the spontaneous blush of emotion; and as he ended, expressing his intentions relative to Lord Westbourn, he clapsed her with paternal fervour to his breast; and bid her "not to fear that she should find him the inexorable parent he had proved to her angel mother. For I have been bitterly taught repentance," said he; "Sydenham has told me, my sweet child, in the exultation of his affection for you, of the late glorious sacrifice you made of love to principle. Be wary, my child, of whom you next love; but the moment you find your heart softening towards any new object, confide in me; and if it should be

in my power to promote your happiness with a man worthy of you, let his situation in life be what it may, you shall be happy, Julia."

"Oh! my own grandfather!" exclaimed Julia, throwing herself into her venerable parent's arms; every tender feeling of her heart awakened by this generous kindness. "Then now—now must my confidence be for you. My heart is softened very much; indeed quite for a new object. It is true, a great deal true; and in so soon time Doctor Sydenham will not believe it: but it is. —And—and I did promise to be his wife, only one evening before last; because the alone parent I did think I had in all the world had given assentment. Lord Ashgrove, dear grandfather, is anxious in approbation for it: and Lord St. Orville I did find it impossible not to love."

"Lord St. Orville!" exclaimed the first alarmed, but now enraptured duke—"The gallant hero, St. Orville, the counterpart in every excellence of his inestimable uncle. "Oh! happy, happy choice! Fortunate, most fortunate Julia! This auspicious pro-

mise of yours, my child, shall indeed be ratified."

Julia now tenderly kissed her grandfather in lively gratitude; and while the tears of joy strayed down her glowing cheeks, she softly said, "Oh! I hope it may; for now I know, I feel I could no more be happy, was I again to be cause for misery to St. Orville."

"But—but my child," demanded the duke, "how stands Lord Delamore affected to this union?"

"Oh! anxious, most anxious for it; and so is Lady Delamore, and both their daughters."

"Both!" said the delighted Doctor Sydenham.

Julia blushed at her inadvertence, but now called upon by her grandfather to give him the history of the rise and progress of St. Orville's love and hers, although her bashfulness taught her to blush and tremble in her obedience to his command, she gave the narrative faithfully.

Her auditors were deeply interested, and when she ended her grandfather felt so

charmed by Lord St. Orville, the protector of his insulated, unclaimed, unfortunate grandchild—her benefactor—her life's preserver—her guide to all of peace or comfort she had known, that for some moments he meditated setting out immediately, to give her, without delay, to this being who so well had earned her; but after a little reflection, he contented himself with writing to Lord Ashgrove, "requesting to see him, with any friends who chose to accompany him, as soon as possible at Valincourt abbey, having something of importance to communicate to him, and from also having his interesting ward, Miss De Clifford, under his protection, whom he looked upon as such a sacred trust, that he would not let her go from beneath his own roof, until he delivered her safe to Lord Ashgrove himself." And this letter he sent off express to Delamore castle, where Julia (from the daily correspondence of Lord St. Orville after he quitted Black Tower abbey, until she was carried from these) knew her benefactor was; and by the same messenger our heroine sent a few lines to Lady Delamore, to assure her, and all her

anxious friends in Dorsetshire, "that she was quite well, notwithstanding her late terrible alarm, and many surprising adventures."

The head butler, not expecting his lord's return from Hampshire so soon, was absent upon his arrival; but returning shortly after, and hearing from his brother-in law, Dormer, of the discovery his grace had made of a grand-daughter, whom he had brought to Valincourt abbey with him; the butler was so overpowered by agitation, that he but narrowly escaped from fainting; and when sufficiently recovered to articulate, he inquired from the astonished Dormer where the young lady was, and waiting to hear no more, rushed impetuously into the room where Julia was sitting with her grandfather, and instantly threw himself at her feet, in a burst of joy too great for utterance; and our heroine, after a few moments of earnest scrutiny, recognized in him Crofts, her father's attached servant.

After this faithful domestic had delivered to our heroine the portraits of her parents, he returned to his ship, and for three years remained in the Mediterranean, without the

possibility of putting any of his projects for Julia's welfare into execution, when after that tedious interval he was permitted by his destiny to revisit his native land; and still anxiously intent upon knowing if Lord Ashgrove really would not fulfil his ever-lamented master's wishes relative to the protection of his child; and hearing his lordship was stationed off the Leeward Islands, went to sea once more, and as captain's steward embarked in a frigate for the West Indies; and though now expecting to see Lord Ashgrove, yet well remembering the misery he had suffered, lest any of the incidental casualties a seaman's life is encompassed with should occasion the loss of those important papers, he wisely resolved not to take them with him, but placed them in a little iron box, in the hands of his late dear master's banker, to remain there until he himself, or the Earl of Ashgrove, should claim them, and with his mind at ease relative to the security of this sacred trust, he entered on his voyage, which turned out a most calamitous one. Poor Crofts missed Lord Ashgrove, who returned to England whilst Crofts was sailing

from it. The poor fellow caught the yellow fever, and was but scarcely recovered from it, when the frigate he was in was attacked by two French seventy-fours, and after an obstinate engagement of three hours was compelled to strike, and poor Crofts became a prisoner.

For about three years this faithful, this humble friend of Julia's, languished in a noisome prison, and only by a cartel a few months prior to this meeting with our heroine, an exchange of prisoners restored him to his disconsolate family, who in his absence had been as unfortunate as himself. His wife, from the calamity of a dreadful fire, was reduced from her comfortable situation of being mistress of a respectable lodging-house, to go out in the decline of life once more to service. Crofts had now no home, and hearing Lord Ashgrove was shortly expected in England, he resolved to trust the seas no more, but to await his arrival upon sure ground. Dormer was brother to Mrs. Crofts, and through his interest her husband obtained the lucrative situation of butler at Valincourt abbey, which Crofts the more

joyfully accepted, as in the family of Avondale he could become a wary observer, and in failure of Lord Ashgrove's espousing his young lady's cause, watch a favourable opportunity of revealing her existence to the Duke of Avondale himself.

The moment our heroine recognized this ever gratefully remembered friend, her joy at meeting him was expressed with so much kindness and cordiality, that the heart of Crofts felt amply recompensed for all the sufferings he had endured in his zeal to serve her.

The duke now for the first time learning whose servant Crofts had been for several years, eagerly demanded from him, "If he knew to whom Colonel De Clifford had confided the certificate of his marriage, and his other papers relative to his daughter's claims?" Crofts was fully competent to answer. They were still in the care of the banker, where he had placed them four years before; and now his grace scarcely allowed poor Crofts to breathe after his tumult of joy and surprise, before he dispatched him in a chaise and four to London for the im-

portant packet for Lord Ashgrove and himself to inspect together.

Scarcely was Crofts gone upon this momentous mission, when poor Lucy, wearing the semblance only of a spectre, arrived. She would come to her beloved lady, though she arose from a bed of sickness to perform the little journey; for a very serious indisposition had been occasioned by her dreadful grief and horror, at losing so unexpectedly and alarmingly her beloved mistress; still she was extremely ill, but beholding our heroine well and in safety, proved a cordial more renovating and expeditious in its operations, than any in the *materia medica* could have done. Lucy brought to Julia a most distressing account of the despair of Lady Theodosia, when upon recovery from her swoon she found her beloved friend was carried off; and firmly believing, by the Marquis of Penmorva, commiseration for her brother added considerably to the anguish of her affliction.

In the first impulse of her frantic grief, Lady Theodosia sent off an express to Dela-

more castle with the dreadful intelligence; but fortunately the messenger, in his zeal for expedition, knocked up his steed in the first twelve miles, and was detained so long upon the road waiting for a horse to proceed, that he was scarcely arrived with the direful news, when the harbinger of joy rang at the portal.

To all our heroine's friends at Delamore castle, the dreadful information conveyed by Lady Theodosia proved agonizing grief; but to Lord St. Orville the shock and anguish were so direful, that had not the messenger of joy so speedily followed with Julia's own billet to Lady Theodosia, the most fatal effects must have proved the consequence.

Upon the arrival of the first express, Lord Delamore, in all the agony of despair and grief, promptly resolved to set out instantly in pursuit of the villainous Penmorva, to trace him through every circle of the globe in quest of this child of his fond and grateful affection. This resolution made known, Lord Ashgrove determined to accompany him; and this project was eagerly resolved upon,

without any regular plan being adopted, when Lady Theodosia's second express bearing Julia's billet of joy arrived.

And now the friends of our heroine were as impatiently anxious to set out to bring her back to their own protection, as they had been to rescue her from Penmorva; but the extremes of grief and joy had so powerfully affected Lord St. Orville, that his alarmed parents would not hear of his setting out in the wild tumult of his feelings, nor until one night passed with Doctor Harlow watching in his apartments, should convince them they had no further to apprehend for the life or intellect of this adored son, who in vain pleaded "that nothing could so effectually restore him to mental and bodily health, as finding that he was actually upon the road, to behold again his now even more than ever tenderly and ardently beloved Julia."

As the violence of Lord Delamore's agitation subsided, and that thoughts of his own individual happiness had an opportunity of presenting themselves, he determined "his Emily should not remain beneath the same roof with their unnatural child during his ab-

sence, lest she should contrive new miseries for them; his Emily should therefore accompany him as far as Black Tower abbey, and there, with De Lisle, to cheer them, remain with her poor unhappy child, who did love her as she ought to be loved, while he, Lord Ashgrove and St. Orville, proceeded to Valincourt abbey for their beloved Julia, and then poor Theodosia and all should return to Delamore castle, from whence he was resolved Julia should go no more, until she was united to St. Orville."

This arrangement of her lord's was joyfully and gratefully acceded to by Lady Delamore, since it would give her some hours longer the society of those she loved, lead her to her afflicted child, and place her in the way of one day sooner beholding the daughter of her heart's adoption. Every thing was now arranged for their departure at an early hour the succeeding morning; and ere they retired to rest that night, the express, with the Duke of Avondale's letter to Lord Ashgrove, arrived, and arrived in time to destroy the repose of his lordship effectually for that night. A letter from the Duke of Avondale,

too severely lacerated wounds in his heart, which even the balm of years had never healed, not to banish sleep from his pillow; and although the duke had not breathed a hint in his letter of the fortunate discovery so providentially made; yet any intercourse with the father of his adored Adelaide, recalled into existence with fullest force all those tender reflections which time in vain had struggled to erase from his remembrance; so that, wan and dejected, he arose to join the anxious party of travellers, that rapidly set forward for Black Tower abbey.

CHAPTER XVIII.

The meeting between Lord and Lady Delamore and their afflicted daughter was so affecting, that perhaps our readers may congratulate themselves upon being spared the delineation of it; but in the first moments of their interview, Lady Theodosia found the tender kindness of her father infinitely more oppressive to her feelings, than his most potent displeasure could have proved; but whilst it subdued her sensibility, it thrilled with joy through the affections of her heart, to find at length she had indeed a father.

But although kind and tender was Lord Delamore to his afflicted, yet certainly transgressing child, he lost not a particle of his impatience to behold in safe sanctuary the daughter adopted by his fond affection and ardent gratitude: and now he knew that Julia had confessed she loved St. Orville, he was all impatience to unite her to his adored son, to bless and reward him for that filial

affection he had so unequivocally evinced, even braving death itself to save the life of a long unkind, tyrannic father; so that the very morning after his arrival at Black Tower abbey, he tore himself from the society (now heaven to him) of his Emily; and, accompanied by Lords Ashgrove and St. Orville, set out for Valincourt abbey, where fortunately for Lord Ashgrove he had never been; so that no tender, local recollections, were dreaded by him in his approach to this place, but those feelings of sensibility excited by the idea of being about to behold his adopted daughter, the child of his beloved, ever-lamented friend, the husband of Lady Adelaide, with the thought of an interview with the Duke of Avondale, whom he had sedulously shunned since the dreadful catastrophe, which he still supposed had direfully terminated the existence of the peerless Adelaide, combined to unnerve him, and make him as full of agitation nearly as Lord St. Orville himself, whose frame trembled and heart palpitated with ungovernable emotion, which still increased, as each mile gone over brought him nearer and still nearer to

his Julia, so lately lost, and so nearly lost to him for ever.

At length this anxious, agitated trio, reached the magnificent gothic abbey of Valincourt, and Lord St. Orville beheld and entered it without one whispering presentiment that he was soon to call it his; but the pride of ancestry called forth the regretting observation of Lord Delamore. Each gateway that they passed, topped with the arms of Delamore and Montalvan quartered; each tower that rose to view, each sculptured tablet, amid the carvings of adornment, brought to his remembrance some heroic deed treasured in the annals of genealogical records, teaching the truant sigh to heave for those precious honours, which fate had ruthlessly torn from the house of Southerland.

"Yet, Alfred," he with energy exclaimed, as he finished his hasty recapitulation of all those pride-wounding reminiscences of honours lost to his son—"yet, Alfred, Julia is worth them all."

Tears of gratitude and exulting tenderness started to Lord St. Orville's eyes, and at this

moment they stopped at the grand entrance door of Valincourt; and though early was the hour of their arrival, the family had breakfasted, and the Duke of Avondale had retired to his library, where these most welcome guests were ushered in to him.

The meeting between the Duke of Avondale and Lord Ashgrove compelled them both to call up every particle of fortitude they could command, to sustain them through it; but as they each possessed a more than common portion of firmness, though poignantly they felt, yet their feelings were so amenable to controul, that soon they assumed the appearance of composure; which in its tranquil precepts led them to the recollection of the duties they owed to others, and the introduction and reception of Lords Delamore and St. Orville took place, when the duke felt most highly gratified in that unequivocal mark of respect and attention thus paid to his still believed, untitled grandchild, in Lord Delamore himself coming to conduct her back to the protection she had been stolen from.

The exterior of Lord St. Orville was infi-

nitely too prepossessing, not promptly to please and interest in an eminent degree the Duke of Avondale; who now beholding in him the tender guardian of his insulated grand-child, the preserver of her life, who watching over her helpless adversity, led her to safe and honourable protection; and in defiance of all the attending humility of her apparent situation, in being the ward of charity, had chosen her for his wife, the participator of all his wealth and honours; felt his gratitude and admiration so forcibly awakened as he gazed upon him, that with difficulty he suppressed the rising tears of sensibility, and subdued the powerful impulse of folding the young protector of his Julia in his arms, avowing his obligations, and promising him his just discovered treasure.

The impatience of all his guests to see our heroine (impatience almost amounting to agony in the breast of her lover) was too evident to escape the observation of his grace; who however wishing himself to read a little the heart of this fascinating lover, gravely addressing Lord Delamore, said—

"Before I gratify the impatient wish of all my respected guests, by conducting them to my present precious charge, Miss De Clifford, I must request a short audience of them upon my own account, relative to the most earnest wish of my heart. From all that the public merits of your heroic son, Lord Delamore, have spoken in his favour; from all that private testimony has declared in his eulogium, I now exactly regard him as I once did his gallant uncle, as the only man in existence deserving a treasure in my hands to dispose of. By the decree of unerring Providence, I have been bereaved of my children, and by their premature deaths all the personal wealth of the house of Avondale, all the estates and honours of the more ancient house of Montalvan, devolve to a most lovely, fascinating young woman, whom I would fain bestow upon his country's pride, and boast, the gallant Lord St. Orville, who is not less regarded by me for being the beloved kinsman of my ever highly estimated friend, Lord Ashgrove.

"What say you, my lords, to my proposition? The heiress of Montalvan is exqui-

sitely beautiful, and rich in every mental treasure. The alliance is, I may presume to say, unexceptionable; and to a Delamore, the re-union of titles so anciently, so honourably combined, must be an object ——"

"Totally out of the power of my father, uncle, or myself, to bestow a thought upon, my lord," said Lord St. Orville, no longer able to restrain the impetuosity of his wishes to utter a decided negative: "I must ever consider myself most highly flattered by the honour your grace's good opinion has conferred upon me; but I have the happiness, my lord, already to have formed an engagement of this nature, under the auspices of my father and my uncle, with the object of my unalienable affections."

"Nor need you hesitate, Alfred, to acknowledge to his grace, who is the beloved of your heart, the chosen daughter of mine, since well you may glory in your choice," said Lord Delamore, with energy and exulting partiality. "Miss De Clifford, the ward of Lord Ashgrove, your grace's present, precious charge, is to be (I have the happiness to say) the wife of my son; and

she is not more the idol of St. Orville's ardent heart, than she is the pride and favourite of Lady Delamore's and mine. Judgment, fancy, gratitude, every feeling that can be awake to the attraction of superlative excellence, attach us to her with hourly augmenting tenderness; and although we must ever feel flattered and grateful in an eminent degree, for the honour of your grace's most kind proposal, yet not all the combined wealth of the universe, not all the dignities that heraldry can boast, in our estimation now, my lord, comprises such attractions as the heart of Julia De Clifford."

Lord St. Orville grasped his father's hand, and pressed it fervently, in trembling gratitude.

"By that eloquent look and action, Lord St. Orville," said the duke, affecting a tone of chagrin, "I am informed Lord Delamore has uttered the sentiments of his son."

"He has," replied Lord St. Orville, with the tears of gratified tenderness trembling in his fine and intelligent eyes, its animating blush glowing on his cheeks—

"And did your grace know even half the virtue of Miss De Clifford's heart, you would acknowledge that I am indeed a most fortunate man, in obtaining a treasure so precious, so inestimable."

"And surely Miss De Clifford is not less fortunate, in so firmly attaching you and your father, Lord St. Orville, and leading you so peremptorily to reject the heiress of Montalvan, for the child of *charity*," said the duke, in a tone of assumed pique.

"Charity!!" exclaimed the three guests of the Duke of Avondale, indignantly. Lord Delamore started with fury from his chair, but ere a second had elapsed, he was re-seated, and calmly, yet proudly, spoke—

"To be the object of Lord Ashgrove's charity is no disgrace.—Yes, duke, Miss De Clifford is an object of *charity*, and yet she is prized and chosen by St. Orville and his father for a wife and daughter—yes, even in preference to the illustrious heiress of Avondale and Montalvan."

"Pardon me, my good lords," exclaimed the secretly delighted duke, "if my mortification upon your decided rejection of my

heiress led me into saying any thing unpleasing to you. The most secure method I can pursue, I believe, for obtaining your forgiveness, is to summon a fair advocate for me; and to you, most ardent lover, I delegate the task of bringing my special pleader hither." His grace now taking Lord St. Orville by the arm, and opening a door, continued—" In the apartments which terminate yonder corridor, you will find my fair solicitress."

Lord St. Orville, with a countenance irradiated by the most animated joy, rushed forward to the goal of his wishes, and found his Julia alone.

The moment our heroine beheld her now, little less than idolatrously adored, St. Orville, she started from her seat, in a wild transport of joy, too powerful for concealment, flew into those arms, expanded to fold her to the throbbing heart of tender, ardent, permanent affection; proving by this unrestrained ebullition of her artless love to the entranced St. Orville, that now indeed her heart had found its home.—

And now the happiness of our hero and

heroine, after all the anguish they had recently suffered in the torturing belief they were for ever separated, destroyed the powers of eloquence in speech; but the broken, half-articulated sentences of excess of feeling, told to each the potent sensation that agitated the heart of the other; and Julia was in the full gladness of mutual tender rapture at this restoration to every promise of felicity, when it suddenly darted into her mind, that Lord St. Orville had not come alone.

"Oh! who, St. Orville," she exclaimed, "did make your companion, to Valincourt!"

"Your two fathers, and my two fathers, Lords Ashgrove and Delamore."

"Where, where," she cried, starting from the tender encircling arms of her lover, "where for me is to see my own benefactor?"

And now she darted out of the room. Lord St. Orville instantly rushed after her; but her speed seemed fleeter than the wind; nor could he overtake her, who, now soaring on the pinions of gratitude, flew to her grandfather's library, where, his being the only stranger there, announcing at once

which was her benefactor, she passed even the expanded arms of Lord Delamore, and sunk breathless, and almost subdued, at the feet of Lord Ashgrove.

Lord Ashgrove beheld his adopted child, in the moment of her entrance; and one glance at her face overpowered his every faculty. Intuitive was the impulse which led him instantly to place his hands before his eyes, to shut out this torturing image of his ever adored, painfully lamented Adelaide. As he thus excluded poor Julia from his vision, he was totally unconscious that she was kneeling in trembling agonized emotion before him, hailing him as her benefactor, until at length her mournful exclamations, in the too well remembered tones of her mother, told him where his adopted child was kneeling in reverence; looking up at him with streaming eyes, and the most eloquent distress, pourtrayed in every line of her agitated countenance, as she piteously articulated her grief, for having so offended her parental benefactor, that he would not even look upon her. For being wholly unacquainted with the sorrows of Lord Ashgrove's life, and

therefore unknowing her parents had created his misery; and that her resemblance to her mother, was now rending his heart with anguish, conceived that she had forfeited his favour by her attachment to Fitzroy.

"Oh, St. Orville!" she at length exclaimed in the most pathetic tone of despondence; turning to him with an affecting look, of deeply felt affliction. "Oh! I did think of this once, and now (oh! misery for me) it is so. I had the great deal fear, my benefactor, would know to hate me, for loving at all, that terrible Penmorva, to make such grief for you, St. Orville."

Lord St. Orville, completely subdued by sympathy for his Julia's touching distress, lost all recollection of there being others present, and snatched her to his breast with a degree of expressive tenderness, that plainly evinced, *he* did not hate her; but on the instant she was snatched from him by Lord Ashgrove, who now pressed her with paternal fervor to his own agitated bosom, whilst he tremulously exclaimed—

"Hate you! Oh! no, my child! Are you not the offspring of my beloved De Clifford?

The sweet semblance of Lady Adelaide?—and though Mrs. St. Clair hated you for *that*,—I shall not hate you for looking like the angel Adelaide; no, nor for loving Penmorva.—Oh! no, no, my child, do what you may, I feel I shall ever tenderly adore my inestimable daughter."

And now, in trembling perturbation, his lordship hastily raised Julia's head from his bosom, to catch a momentary look at her (to him) heart-afflicting countenance. Only a transient glance could he bear; and tenderly he hid this painful resemblance upon his heaving bosom, softly articulating—

"Oh! how indeed was it possible for her to hate you, Julia, for looking like the angel Adelaide?"—And now our heroine, feeling the fast-flowing tears of her benefactor dropping on her forehead, the convulsive sobs of sympathy, painfully mingled with those of her before awakened sensibility, to agitate her bosom.

The Duke of Avondale, little less perturbed than the benefactor of his grandchild, now laid his tremulous hand upon the shoulder of Lord Ashgrove, and falteringly said—

"Ashgrove, this is indeed a most perfect resemblance to that angelic being my obduracy and blind credulity consigned to an early tomb. At first the semblance was torturing to my heart, but now it is my solace; my consolation; and so I trust you will find it; for though at first, it proved anguish to me, to behold the image of my darling child, the more perfect model of my adored wife; the pain has found its cure in the balmy magic of her face; which steals in sweet comfort to my soul, in shewing to me that death has spared me something to look like my Julia and my Adelaide."

"Alas!" said the weeping Julia, "and does my face make sad pain too, for my benefactor?—Oh! I will vail it, mask it; any thing will I do, to make not pain for him, to look upon me. Alas! it is much in terrible affliction, to have bad face to grieve my parent and my benefactor."

Lord Ashgrove now hurt at his weakness, and extremely indignant with himself for thus wounding the susceptible feelings of his interesting adoption, and the parent of Lady Adelaide, made one vigorous effort to regain

his self-possessions. His tears were suddenly arrested in their fall; he smiled in dissembled tranquillity, and gently placing Julia on a seat beside him, with one powerful exertion, he acquired sufficient firmness to look without shrinking from the gaze; and as he looked, and smiled, to speak the words of tender assuring kindness to her.

And now Lord Delamore, not longer able to restrain his impatience to greet the child of his heart, and object of his fervent gratitude, affectionately said—

"Julia, will you then not bestow one look or word upon me?" and now in one moment she was clasped in his arms with paternal tenderness, and the Duke of Avondale, with an effort at mirth, to chase if possible the gloom of melancholy retrospections from the bosom of Lord Ashgrove, and from his own, with assumed cheerfulness, exclaimed—

"Upon my word, Miss De Clifford, you are the most affectionately kind young lady I have lately met with; and the most liberal of your caresses.—I have already seen you, (though short our acquaintance) in the fervent embrace of Doctor Sydenham, Lord

Ashgrove, and my Lord Delamore. I doubt not, Lord St. Orville had no prudish reserve to complain of in your meeting; and I feel almost persuaded, that if I ask you for a tender salute, you will not refuse me.—Come, Miss De Clifford, use me not worse than my guests."

Julia perceiving by the tone of her grandfather's voice and smile, that he was making an effort for the restoration of cheerfulness, and that he meant to *badiner* a little before he announced her as his grandchild, to his guests, (which by his addressing her, as Miss De Clifford, she conjectured that he had not yet done,) she started from Lord Delamore's still tenderly encircling arms, flew to the duke, clasped her hands around his neck, and to humour his sportive intention gave him an affectionate kiss.

It is totally impossible for our feeble power of delineation to assist us now in pourtraying the amazement of Lords Delamore and Ashgrove, or the emotions of Lord St. Orville.—Here was no motive for this action, upon which this idolizing lover could build his firm faith, that when accounted for,

the explanation would exalt her higher than ever in the estimation of those who knew how to appreciate excellence. To any degrading motive he would not attribute her conduct, and all, alas! that was left for him, was the idea most horrible, of the terror she had lately experienced, in being torn from her friends (for he yet knew of no other she had encountered) operating on a mind of exquisite susceptibility, and leading her to insanity. He had, with tender anxious concern, observed how languid and agitated her expressive countenance had appeared; and now in the anguish of direful conviction, he rushed, pale, and trembling in the convulsive irritation of heart-chilled horror, to the side of Julia, scarcely knowing his intention; but something of a vague plan, floating in his mind, of flying with her instantly to the best medical advice to be obtained.

"My love," said the duke, smiling playfully, and taking affectionately the terror-chilled hand of the trembling Lord St. Orville, "we have inflicted the pangs of jealousy in this young man's bosom, I perceive.—Come, we must be more guarded in future, Julia;

for you should not grieve him, as I can tell you, he has absolutely, since his arrival at Valincourt, rejected for you the heiress of Montalvan."

Julia now, with tears of grateful affection trembling in her eyes, turned to her St. Orville; and with a smile of beseeching sweetness, yet accompanied by a blush of timid bashfulness, for what she pleaded, said—

"Indeed, but you must not make rejection of the heiress of Montalvan; since, if she is not to be for wife to you, I shall not more know happiness, St. Orville."

Lord St. Orville's horrible conviction of her insanity agonizingly augmented.

"Indeed," said his grace, putting Julia's hand into Lord St. Orville's, "the heiress of Montalvan must be your wife, or I shall not more know happiness myself. So pray take her, my good boy, from the hand of her grandfather; and will you not join me, my Lords Delamore and Ashgrove, in invoking Heaven to shower down every blessing upon these our children. Alfred Southerland, commonly called Lord St. Orville, and Julia Adelaide De Clifford, Countess of Montalvan?"

"Gracious powers! what, what mean you, duke?" exclaimed the amazed, half anticipating Lord Ashgrove, panting for breath.

"My meaning, Ashgrove," his grace replied, "has called from me the most potent exertions of my fortitude to sustain; but has proved all of joy, happiness, and consolation, the rived heart of the parent now can know. You will hear it with amazement; but bear it with firmness, Ashgrove.—This sweet child is my whole surviving progeny.—She is, beyond all possibility of doubting, the child of my Adelaide and De Clifford."

"Oh! Merciful Providence! why, oh! why did not Adelaide escape the direful conflagration too?—but, yet, yet *that* took place before the possibility of our child being born," exclaimed the painfully, potently agitated benefactor of our heroine.

"It did;—but hear, with rapture, as I did, Ashgrove," replied the duke. "My child perished not by that soul-harrowing catastrophe.—No, my friend, she lived, to breathe her last sigh upon the bosom of her husband; she left him this sweet miniature of herself to twine her memory more closely round his

heart, and yet he married ere her clay was cold."

"He did," said Julia, eagerly withdrawing from her amazed lover's tender grasp, and anxiously taking the hand of her grandfather: "but why was that mystery, Crofts will bring solution of; but not believe, he ever at all, did love any wife, but my own dear mother. Oh! so true is my memory, to all of his sufferings, that sure conviction I have his love was only for his Adelaide."

Julia was painfully interrupted; Lord Ashgrove heard his adored Adelaide had not perished by merciless flames; heard she had been restored to happiness and her husband: his overjoyed senses could sustain no more; and he fell into the arms of Lord Delamore in a swoon.

The unfeigned grief of our heroine fully evinced how potent was her gratitude, ere they could effect the recovery of her benefactor; but when his senses and respiration re-assumed their powers, he earnestly entreated to hear all. The agitated Julia was deputed by her grandfather to give the narrative of those circumstances, which had come to

their knowledge; and by his desire, her story commenced from the moment she had fallen into the power of the villainous Lord Westbourn.

All that menaced her own individual safety, she slightly sketched in faintest colouring, in tenderness to the feeling of her lover, whose agitation, even in her faint delineations, taught her in pity to throw a veil over the magnitude of the horrors she had encountered. Her eventful history was too interesting to all, not to awaken the most powerful sensations in the breast of her auditors, who now all experienced painful anxiety for the return of Crofts, to learn more fully the history of Colonel and Lady Adelaide De Clifford, which Crofts, ere his hasty departure, informed the duke was contained in a narrative written by Adelaide herself.

CHAPTER XIX.

CROFTS was too impatient to prove the right of his beloved, still lamented master's child to her maternal inheritance, to make one moment's unnecessary delay; and therefore as speedily as possibility would admit of, he brought to Valincourt that important packet which had travelled many a mile with him, and had proved the cause of the various misfortunes he had endured; but now, his "dear little *missy* was righted," and his heart told him, "his sufferings were all repaid."

This packet, directed to Lord Ashgrove, was opened by him, but its contents were inspected by his lordship and the agitated duke together. In it they found every proof the law demanded for our heroine's right of inheritance to her mother's wealth and honours; as her anxious, tender parents had left nothing unobtained in attestation of her birth and claims. But the me-

lancholy and affecting narrative of Lady Adelaide, addressed to the Duke of Avondale, her solemn assignment of her husband and child to the favour and protection of her father, with the unfortunate De Clifford's pathetic account of her death, his own compulsive marriage, and subsequent misery, his apprehensions relative to the safety and happiness of his child, and the affecting manner in which he consigned that child to the protection of his friend, in a long epistle to Lord Ashgrove, (only completed by Colonel De Clifford the day of his own dissolution,) proved more than those to whom these heart-riving narratives were addressed, could sustain with firmness. They were each compelled to fly to the sacred sanctuary of retirement in their own apartments, to indulge in feelings too powerful for concealment, and to importune the aid of Heaven to support their fortitude. The duke, although dreadfully affected, only suffered mentally; but the agitation of Lord Ashgrove's sensitive feelings brought on serious illness, and the

succeeding day found his life menaced by indisposition.

The sincerely afflicted Lord Delamore went himself to break this distressing intelligence to his Emily, and to aim at consoling her by his soothing tenderness, in her little journey to the sick chamber of her beloved brother. Lady Theodosia and Lord De Lisle accompanied Lord and Lady Delamore to Valincourt, where, surrounded by so many individuals, who tenderly regarded him, the amiable Lord Ashgrove experienced every care which anxious affection could bestow: but among the afflicted friends who watched by his pillow, his adopted daughter was not the least attentive, or distressed. Interested motives had no longer cause to actuate her, so that most unequivocally was stamped upon the mind of Lord Ashgrove the firm conviction of Julia's filial affection and fervent gratitude. His wistful eyes emitting rays of pleasure, which even sickness had not power to veil, rested for consolation upon the combined image of his adored Adelaide and beloved De Clifford; and her voice, in the tender

accents of anxiety, with every kind attention which her feelings led her to perform for his comfort, seemed gifted with the balm of magic to heal his ills.

After three days of anxious, torturing alarm for his safety, Lord Ashgrove became each hour perceptibly better, to the manifest joy of his attached nurses; and at the expiration of a few days more, he arose from his bed, although wan, languid, attenuated, and still pensive; yet, with a marked change of countenance from what he for years had worn. The barbed arrow which had rankled in his heart causing never minorated anguish there, and stamping his brow with the legible character of mental wretchedness, occasioned by the belief of the direful mode of Lady Adelaide's death, and of her having thrown her inestimable affections away upon a man who could forget her and wed another ere her mortal clay was cold, had now been happily removed.—Now, he knew, that although severe had been the sufferings of De Clifford and his peerless Adelaide, she had not died a death of excruciating tor-

tures. She had expired upon her earthly heaven, the bosom of her husband, who now was proved fully deserving of her love; and although he felt he had many a tear yet to shed for the misfortunes of this tenderly lamented pair; many a bitter one to drop for having dared to suspect the permanency of De Clifford's unalienable affection for his Adelaide; and for his own unkindness in his unfounded anger, leading him not to answer the letters of his heart-wounded friend; yet was he now a comparatively happy man:—he could smile from his heart, although still was many a treasured sorrow there; and his attached friends could now look on his fine and interesting countenance without the sad, spontaneous tear of sympathy starting to their eyes.

The danger of the inestimable Lord Ashgrove past, and his convalescence hourly evincing itself, Ladies Delamore, Montalvan, and Theodosia, could turn their hearts to the enjoyment of each other's society. Julia could, with fascinating sweetness, show how cordially they were welcome to

Valincourt; and her friends listen to all the tales of wonder she had to impart, and congratulate her and St. Orville upon their bright prospect of every earthly happiness.

The moment Lord Ashgrove was sufficiently recovered to enter into serious conversation with the Duke of Avondale, he earnestly entreated for the marriage of Lady Montalvan and Lord St. Orville not to be unnecessarily delayed, that he might have the satisfaction, during the short interval of what he felt persuaded was only a transient delusive peace, to behold the happiness of those, his beloved children. His grace fearing too the delusive dream of life might pass away from him before this heart-wish of his could be gratified, was all anxiety for the nuptials.—Lord Delamore felt impatient to insure the happiness of his inestimable adored son, and to secure to his Emily and himself the daughter of their fond affection. Lord St. Orville, our readers can suppose, was not a strenuous advocate for *tardy* measures; and Julia agreed to an early period for her marriage, because St. Orville pleaded for it.

The Duke of Avondale had without delay dispatched his lawyers to meet those of Lord Westbourn, to substantiate the claims and right of Julia De Clifford to the title and estates of Montalvan, to the exclusion of the Baroness of Fontsevern; and now they were afforded more employment in wading through all the parchments necessary to be inspected in the process of drawing out the marriage-settlements of the heir of Delamore, and the heiress of Montalvan.

It was in a few days after the returning health of Lord Ashgrove permitted his visiting the hospitable board of the Duke of Avondale in the family circle, that our heroine, to her infinite astonishment, received a letter bearing the arms and signature of the Earl of Castlehaven; and the matter it contained was thus expressed.

"Madam,

"Will you permit me to address you as my cousin? It is my sincere wish to call, and consider you my kinswoman, although,

until a very short period since, I knew not that I had so estimable a relation.—You, I find, have every claim to my regard; whilst I,—alas! I fear, have none to yours, except I found it upon bearing the name of your most amiable father; and though gifted with no similitude to his exalted merits, yet, in many respects, claiming kindred with his misfortunes, for long I was the discarded younger son of my father, an exiled Frederick De Clifford: my all, my honour, and my sword.

"Allow me to drop the further mention of our fathers.—To talk of mine, alas! is pain and humiliation to me.—To mention yours, although his life you must contemplate in exulting pride; yet to think of him in death must be grief; and I hope never voluntarily to afflict you.

"My elder, and only brother, (as most probably my lovely cousin knows,) was so unfortunately thoughtless, so fond of the dissipations of life, that those pursuits his fatal propensities led him into drew him from domestic virtues, and overshadowed all those seeds of excellence nature im-

planted in his breast. At an early age he married an inestimable woman, who ought to have constituted his happiness, for she had full powers; but he soon disregarded her, because she was his own; and after a career of unfortunate excesses, a rapid fever terminated his existence at the early age of twenty-seven; and he left no son to inherit possessions which he had mortgaged and dissipated long since in every way he had means to effect.

"Upon coming thus unexpectedly into the possessions of my ancestors, I had many papers to inspect; among which I had the pain and horror to find how my noble kinsman had been treated by those I ought to venerate the remembrance of: but, alas! alas! how can I, when principle revolts, and teaches me the misery of condemning them?

"It is only a very few days since I learned my amiable, ill-treated, unfortunate uncle left any offspring; and with my first knowledge of Lady Montalvan's existence, I received the intelligence of her being now exalted far above what my sense of

rectitude might lead me to offer in retribution for injustice; and since, for my fair cousin, is at length a lot so auspicious, any thing further upon the subject from me would now sound like indelicate boasting.

"Your portrait has been drawn for me, both form and mind; and from both, I find, I must call you lovely. So my lovely cousin, I most anxiously wish for your friendship; and I am of opinion that the best method I can adopt to warm a heart like yours to me, is, to put it in your power to confer an incalculable obligation upon me, by leading you to prove the means of making me one of the most blest among the favoured race of happy mortals.

"When my all was a company of infantry, and a small annuity from my father, I was quartered with my regiment at Exeter, where it pleased the almighty God of love to make me the everlasting captive of your affectionate friend, the fascinating Mary Mildmay.

"From the period of my first introduction to Miss Mildmay, I became her shadow.—I besieged the house of Mrs. Spen-

cer with indefatigable perseverance, and obtained admittance there whenever it was possible to effect it. Love soon taught me to pay all its little tender assiduities to the fascinating Mary, and she received them without an inauspicious frown; but when I first breathed forth an avowal of my ardent passion, she promptly told me, with that beautiful frankness which marks her bewitching character, every circumstance of her origin. To the pride of ancestry this was an unwelcome hearing, but love disdained it; and brooking no obstacle, I implored her to be mine; yet I honestly confessed it must be clandestinely, since well I knew my father would never assent to so unequal an union; one so inimical to his project for my making my fortune by a wealthy marriage.

"But the generous, noble Mary, recoiled from the idea of overwhelming me in ruin, from drawing upon me the eternal displeasure of a no very partial father, and firmly she rejected me; though well I developed her wishes for my interest, not a heart of indifference, prompted this rejection; and

now more than ever adoring her, and feeling a perfect conviction I could never know happiness without Mary, I made the vain attempt to win my father's approbation to an alliance which I considered would confer honour, by the virtues it could boast, upon any family. But successless was the rash attempt: he forbade me his presence for ever, and withdrew from me the small annuity he before allowed me: altered his will, bequeathed my sister all that had been settled upon younger children, except one shilling, which to come within the compact of his marriage-settlements, he left to me.

"Now indeed, I felt myself undone. Effectually was I now, I thought, bereaved of Mary, for to involve her into my poverty was an idea I turned in horror from. England became hateful to me. The world a desert—I wished to fly from all who knew me, since my intercourse with society was misery to me. I soon therefore effected an exchange into a regiment stationed in the West Indies. I wrote, (as I believed,) an eternal farewell to my adored Mary, and

quitted England, as I then hoped, for ever. Shortly after my arrival there, I received the intelligence of my inexorable father's death.—He had not relented ere he died; and my brother had bereft himself of the power of evincing his fraternal regard for me. My sister was married, and to a man, to whom the wealth of empires would be scarcely sufficient to feed his insatiate avarice. I had therefore nothing to hope for from the assistance of friends, but with a heart still full of Mary, and with nothing now on earth to depend upon but my own exertions, I resolved at once upon death, ——or life, happiness, and Mary. From that moment I volunteered my services upon every enterprise likely to coincide with my wishes, in many of which I proved eminently successful; and after a dreary, wretched absence of five years, I returned a month since to England with the rank of lieutenant-colonel and ten thousand pounds; in part prize-money, earned upon occasions which I may venture to say were not dishonourable to me; part the hard savings of the most rigid economy, which, (while

shrinking from the appellation of miser, which I obtained for Mary) I practised, to enable me to make a provision for the woman I adored.

"Full of hope, I landed in England; for I knew through the correspondence of a friend in Devonshire that my beloved was yet unmarried. I was convinced of her not being an ambitious woman; and believed she could be happy with me in some comfortable cottage near the castle of her amiable benefactress. But fate ordained higher views for me; and greeted me with the title of my forefathers on my return to my native land.

"My brother had been just six weeks consigned to the tomb of his ancestors; and although sincere was my grief for the deprivation of a beloved brother, I yet lost not a moment in writing to my adored Mary to offer her a husband, now in rank and riches, worthy of her excellence, and who for constancy claimed some regard from her. Her answer only told me 'she was in London, and where.' You well may imagine I delayed not an instant in flying

to the presence of my heart's idol, who received me as if my return was indeed joy to her;—and yet,—oh! yet, she will not promise to be mine; will not permit me to make any application to Lady Delamore for her approbation to my marriage with her amiable protegée.

"Miss Mildmay first announced to me I had a lovely cousin; drew your portrait for me, and so fascinating it appears in every mental excellence, I feel I must love you; and claiming the tie of consanguinity, I now petition for your regard and friendship; and fond of the hope that you will grant my petition, I cling to the belief of its certainty; and act as if it was already so, by making you the confident of my passion for Miss Mildmay, who has informed me of your being no stranger to the motives which actuate her conduct. You, she is certain, will approve her proceedings, and would act exactly as she does. The amiable friends she is with, Lady Frances Harcourt, and Mrs. Fermor, seem to give me every encouragement, not only in permitting my constant visits to Mary, but

by daily inviting me to their table, while they coincide with her in thinking the consent of Lord and Lady Delamore to her marriage ought not yet to be obtained.

"I know there is something upon my adored Mary's mind that agitates her more than I can bear to see her agitated. The mentioning Lord or Lady Delamore to her overpowers her with distressing emotion, causing a sudden flush, or blanch of cheek, a trembling frame, a faltering voice, or starting tear, which often sends her from me to recover her composur.

"For pity's sake tell me' my sweet cousin, what can all this mystery mean? Is Mary in disgrace with her benefactress? If she is, her conduct has been misrepresented, for Mary could do nothing reprehensible, nothing to merit displeasure; and I implore you plead for her through the influence you possess over the amiable St. Orville; plead for her by every exertion of the power you hold yourself over the hearts of Lord and Lady Delamore. If Mary has not forfeited their favour, and that you see no impropriety in my request, oh! plead for my happiness with them and Mary.

"My paternal inheritance, although it has devolved unincumbered to me, is only eight thousand *per annum*; but surely Mary will think that sufficient with the man she loves. I am ready to make any arrangement in settlements which Lord Delamore may deem necessary: but in those arrangements I will not have it considered that Mary has not claims as great as if she brought me thousands; and her own ten thousand pounds, which I accumulated for her, shall be hers independent of every other provision.

"For six years I have suffered the miseries of desponding love. For a few months, under the auspices of hope, I had a dream of all earthly happiness before my vision: but now, suspense bears down my fortitude, and I feel I cannot longer sustain this anguish of uncertainty.

"My cousin, pity me; plead for me; and write soon, in the language of certainty, to

"Your sincere friend,

"CASTLEHAVEN."

The perusal of this letter awakened so many emotions in the susceptible mind of Julia, that her adoring St. Orville (whom no change of countenance in her could escape) now trembling in anxious sympathy, intreated to know "what had caused her excessive agitation?"

"Oh!" she exclaimed, "it is the first of all intercourse I ever had with any of my dear father's family, St. Orville, and it is a letter for affecting me with pain and pleasure too. Read it for yourself, while I make answer to it."

A letter the preceding day from Mary announced to Julia, that the lawyers, before whom her cause had been laid, had pronounced her incontestibly the child of Lord and Lady Delamore; and that a criminal prosecution was to be commenced against Mrs. Monk for child-stealing, the moment her parents being apprized of the imposture, permitted her friends to bring the cause before the public, and as it was now necessary for the discovery to be made to them, she committed the whole arduous task to Julia, to whom she then confessed the history of

her long secret attachment to her cousin, Frederick De Clifford; related the whole of his generous conduct in poverty, his disinterested attachment in prosperity.

"That I love Lord Castlehaven most tenderly I am not ashamed to own to you," said Mary in continuation; "and your being his relative, and bearing his name, led me on to love you, even earlier than your own merits would have awakened my regard; but now that I have a father I cannot promise from myself to be his; I cannot permit his yet applying to Lord and Lady Delamore for their consent, since to them it would be reprehensibly unfair to allow them to dispose of their child, under the belief of her being the humble Mary Dungate.

"I have not yet announced the secret of my birth to my constant Frederick, as I would have the full extent of his generosity evince itself to all my friends, ere he knows neither pride nor ambition have a sacrifice to make in an union with me."

From the moment Julia received this letter, she felt the most trembling anxiety to execute with safety the arduous task as-

signed her. Without the assistance of her St. Orville, she knew she could never make the important discovery to the abused parents; and how to impart the joyful intelligence gently to St. Orville was her tender care. She therefore summoned Lord De Lisle to a private conference, immediately after the arrival of Mary's letter on the preceding day, and nearly overwhelmed this amiable young man by pleasure and amazement, in her communications to him, whom she now intreated to make the discovery to Lord St. Orville; but this his lordship declined, for feeling as a lover himself, he considered her the most eligible person to make the disclosure.

"Imparted by you, Lady Montalvan," he said, "and told in the resistless voice of tender, anxious interest, love will be the prominent feeling of his heart, and deaden the lively susceptibility of every other."

"Then—then," said the blushing Julia, "do you make the communication of it to Lady Theodosia."

Lord De Lisle grasped the hand of Lady Montalvan with trembling agitation, and almost panting for breath, he exclaimed— "Oh! for mercy, tell me what you mean!"

"I mean," she replied, "if love can have such effect, for you to tell our beloved Theodosia; since sure I am the most tender affection for you is fast making mingle in her heart, with her all ardent grief for the poor amiable Mandeville."

At this moment they were joined by Lady Theodosia, who blushed on beholding the hand of our heroine in the fervent grasp of Lord De Lisle, and observing their mutual agitation. She felt disposed to be out of humour with them both for the remainder of the day; yet ashamed of her weakness she rallied her spirits, and making every mental exertion to subdue her chagrin, her parents and her friends had the joy of seeing her in a disposition more like her own natural cheerful one, than she had been in since the commencement of her misfortunes.

CHAPTER XX.

Julia, now panting for a favourable opportunity of disclosing this wonderful discovery to Lord St. Orvillle, hailed the arrival of Lord Castlehaven's letter as the means of affording her one; since she doubted not curiosity to learn the motive of Mary's apparently inexplicable conduct, would lead him to make those inquiries she was anxious to answer. She therefore gave him Lord Castlehaven's letter to peruse, and hastened to reply to it, fearing lest agitation after the interesting disclosure to St. Orville should render her incapable of doing it by that post; and now not without considerable emotion she addressed the following lines to Lord Castlehaven:—

"Since it is your wish, do call me cousin, and so will I call you; for as you bear my own dear father's name, think of him with regard, and say of him

with reverence, I cannot help but love you.

"Mary is not in disgrace with Lady Delamore, never was, never can be with those who understanding have of her inestimable character.

"For very certainly, my good cousin, love has been doing all possible advantage for you, in much cunningly winning for you the heart of Mary, and teaching you now, to ask in all of generosity for her. You have sown with the hand of disinterestedness in the soil of true affection, and your harvest will be for abundance.

"I do know my sweet friend's motives, and as I do of all her thoughts and actions, give my approbation for them, yet in conformity to her wishes cannot betray her secrets. But if you can tear yourself from Mary, come to Valincourt, and I will do all help in possibility for you, in the good regard of Lord and Lady Delamore. St. Orville shall be friend for you; or I will say, 'I have made mistake of him; for firmly I did believe generous, disin-

terested love, would in his heart find kindred sympathy, kindred approbation.'

"Make no delay, but hasten very much to Valincourt; and I do pronounce you may make journey in good certainty; for I see no reason why for, Mary may not be dear wife for you. Come then to-morrow, if you get my letter in soon time; and if you come at all like the form of my own father, you will indeed be most welcome to the heart of

"Your affectionate cousin,

"MONTALVAN."

Lord St. Orville was penetrated to the very soul of sensibility, by the disinterested affection thus evinced by Lord Castlehaven, for his fraternally beloved Mary, was charmed with him; and delighted at her happy prospects with a man so deserving of her excellence: but as Julia expected, Mary's conduct awakened his curiosity, and led him into inquiry relative to the motives of it, Julia's reply was, putting her answer to Lord Castlehaven into his hand to

read, in doing which his astonishment increased, and again he intreated Julia to confide in him.

Lady Montalvan, with ineffably attractive sweetness, bantered him upon his feminine curiosity, while she rang for a glass of water, which she laid upon a table near where Lord St. Orville and herself were seated.

"This preparation is for you, St. Orville," she said, "though I do tremble as if for myself I should have cause for it; but why for I tremble, is in joy to think I am about to give you great gladness in surprise I have for you, of what at all you could not ever have thought of. Oh! it will be strong happiness for your dear mother, Alfred; but for your good father, first pain will mingle with his joy, for thought of how to art he was long a dupe, and made such misery for himself and his own Emily."

And now gently laying her hand upon the shoulder of the agitated Lord St. Orville, she cautiously and judiciously an-

nounced to him the discovery of Mary's being his legitimate sister.

The affectionate kindness of Julia's manner, the tone of her voice, so expressive of tender anxiety, eager to minorate the effect of a too powerful surprise, thrilled to the heart of Lord St. Orville, and inthralling his senses in the potent magic of love, proved Lord De Lisle a sage adviser; for Julia's self, and not her recital, fastened upon his sensibility, and enabled him to sustain the joyful amazement of a discovery so auspicious to the happiness of all his family, though not with apathy, yet with certainly more firmness and composure than he otherwise could have evinced.

In the course of this day Lord Ashgrove was cautiously made a participator in this happy discovery, by his nephew and his adopted daughter, when they all together held a counsel upon the most expedient method of disclosing it to Lady Delamore, whom they all thought should be apprized of it before her husband; for although they were aware of how powerfully the intelli-

gence would affect her, yet it could not be so likely to subdue her as Lord Delamore, who would have the pain of mortification and self-upbraiding to mingle with his surprise and joy, and weigh upon his feelings when his Emily's tender consolations would be found most necessary.

After much deliberation, they at length determined upon a plan in which Doctor Sydenham was to be the principal auxiliary. Julia, the succeeding morning, read to Ladies Delamore and Theodosia Lord Castlehaven's letter; and nothing could equal their joy at this brilliant and happy prospect for their beloved Mary, except their astonishment at her apparently inexplicable conduct. "But Julia was in her secrets;" And Lady Delamore asked her—"If she could without any infringement of the laws of friendship impart to her the solution of all this mystery?" And Lady Theodosia importuned her, "whether compatible with the laws of friendship or not, to gratify their painful curiosity."

Julia smiled upon them both, while she

declared the impossibility of disclosing Mary's secrets at that time; but desired them to prepare their minds for the most happy surprise they had ever experienced.

Both mother and daughter now fell into a train of painful perplexity and conjecture. Lady Delamore had long thought Mrs. Fermor's carrying Mary off to town without permitting her to say adieu at Delamore castle, detaining her so long there, and Lady Frances Harcourt joining their mysterious party in town, very strange; while Mary's short and formally restrained letters surprised and grieved her; now more inexplicabilities were added to the former, and what could 'all mean?

After some time allowed to Lady Theodosia for this unsatisfactory train of meditation and wild conjecture, her brother and Lord De Lisle thinking her mind sufficiently prepared for the important discovery, contrived to draw her into a walk with them, without awakening suspicion in the mind of her mother. In this walk the secret was disclosed to her, when her transports of joy were as wild and ungovernable as her companions expected them to be, and so little amenable to

controul that they could not permit her to appear before her mother until the discovery should have been made to Lady Delamore. Lord De Lisle therefore readily undertook to remain with his cousin to strive to tranquillize her perturbation, and sooth her into that calmness necessary to sustain her through her naturally affecting interview with her mother; and Lord St. Orville hastened to the presence of his beloved parent, to aid in supporting her through the conflict of powerful feelings which awaited her.

The Duke of Avondale had purposely taken Lord Delamore with him upon an expedition to view a farm at some distance from the abbey; and soon after the arrival of the post, as Lady Delamore was sitting still in pensive, thoughtful perplexity, while her brother, son, and Julia, were striving to appear engaged by their common chit-chat conversation, Doctor Sydenham entered the room, with an open letter in his hand.

"As it is the duty of every inmate in a lonely house, at this dreary season of the year," said this venerable man, "to contribute all the amusement they can to the ge-

neral stock, I have brought an interesting letter to read to you, Ladies Delamore and Montalvan. I have just received it from a friend of mine, a lawyer, who is employed upon the extraordinary cause he has given me a narrative of, and upon which we might moralize for ages."

Doctor Sydenham now read a concise history of the domestic sorrows of Lord and Lady Delamore, comprising the machinations of Mrs. Monk, and the story of the vile imposture; but giving the characters in his narrative under the appellations of A.B.C, &c.

At the commencement of this history, read by Doctor Sydenham, Lady Delamore was too abstracted to attend; but as he proceeded, something sounding analogous to her own life arrested her attention, awakened her interest, and powerfully affected her, yet no suspicion of the fact crept into her mind, but a wish that her fate, so like in many respects, had continued its similitude, even to the atrocious imposture, arose from her heart; and once arisen it fastened upon her mind, and led her into realizing this wish in the wide field of possibility.

"Yes! it was very possible for Mrs. Monk to form so iniquitous a project—it was possible to effect it—and oh! rapture of raptures! it was possible Mary might be her child; not the viper she had cherished."

To this flattering region of possibility Lady Delamore fondly soared, until her roaming there had so visible an effect upon her susceptible nervous system, that her friends conceived suspicion of the fact had (as they intended) crept into her mind; and believing it judicious not to permit her long to suffer the tortures of incertitude, Lord Ashgrove gently took her in his arms, and in a voice faltering from emotion, said—

"You have been contemplating that interesting narrative of Doctor Sydenham's, I doubt not, Emily. Will not my beloved sister favour her anxious friends with one of her sweet comments upon it?"

The action of Lord Ashgrove, and the tones of his voice, electrified Lady Delamore. She gazed in his face; his look of tender, joyful, agitated sympathy, flashed at once conviction to her heart, and wildly shrieking, she slid from his arms upon her knees.

"Oh! merciful Heaven! *she* is, *she* is my child!" and from her knees she instantly sunk to the floor in a swoon.

Long and alarming was the suspension of Lady Delamore's faculties, and when at length her tender, anxious friends, restored her to her respiration, her amazed senses seemed to have fled their boundaries. Her language was incoherent, but her eager attempts to escape from her son's encircling arms, with the wild words she uttered, evinced her intention of going with the happy intelligence to her husband, and then to hasten with him to their insulated child. At last tears came in torrents to her relief, and after a violent burst of convulsive sobbing they flowed with freedom, her senses returned, and she retired to solitude to give thanks to the merciful Being, who had permitted this providential discovery to be made, and to implore a sufficient portion of fortitude to sustain her in such an unexpected tide of happiness.

After the amazed senses of Lady Delamore had tranquillized into the possibility of reflection, she thought of the horror and dismay this (though to her joyful) discovery

would inflict upon the susceptible mind of her lord, whom well she knew would cherish every mental upbraiding of himself, as being the ostensible cause of such a direful imposition; and full of terror for the effect of all this upon her husband, and panting with impatience to fold her child in her maternal arms, in consciousness of a mother's feelings, and to weep over her for all the injustice iniquity had heaped upon her; her agitated frame, and untranquil countenance, evinced the conflict of her mind, and her adoring husband believing all arose from commencing indisposition, became almost franticly impatient for her immediate return to Delamore castle, to the care of Beville and Doctor Harlow.

Lord Delamore now promptly announced to the Duke of Avondale his apprehensions of the air of Valincourt not agreeing with Lady Delamore; and requested that all the party there might set out, without delay, to Delamore castle, to spend the intermediate time until their return became necessary to celebrate the nuptials of their children.

The duke had too much benevolence of heart, and too much urbanity of manners, to make any objection to a proposition prompted by the anxious tenderness of a husband; and although he knew the malady of Lady Delamore was mental, yet believing the change of scene might be serviceable to her; and the action the removal would give to his lordship's thoughts might prevent his developing the cause of his wife's nervous susceptibility prematurely; he readily assented to Lord Delamore's request, and it was soon arranged, that early the following morning all the Valincourt party were to proceed to Delamore castle.

"But, how am I to do for my cousin? You know, grandfather dear," said Julia, "that I have expectations of him here in all of possibility's speed; and how can I make disappointment for him? Lord St. Orville to be sure does think for certainly he will be here to-night, for that at ten o'clock this morning, he received my letter; and that four horses to his chaise, and the spur for impatience, will bring him to take sleep at Valincourt to-night."

Lord Delamore wondered what rapid cousin Julia and St. Orville expected; but making no comment, he addressed our heroine, hoping, "Whoever her cousin was, if he arrived that night, or early the next morning, that he would have no objection to accompany their party, and make his visit to her at Delamore castle, where every friend of hers would meet as cordial a reception as they could at Valincourt."

"I thank you, my dear lord," replied Julia.—"My cousin will have great wish for accompanying you; and I have hopes you will give him kind reception, for his very own sake; and that you will much like him, for then I know Lady Delamore will:—and not say her negative, for his wedding with Miss Mildmay; for why Lord Castlehaven makes so rapid journey, to where am I, is, that I have given him a promise to be his auxiliary, to get dear Mary to be his own wife."

The astonishment of Lord Delamore suspended the pleasure he felt in this brilliant prospect, for the interesting Mary. "What!" he exclaimed, "the Earl of Castlehaven

marry Mary Dungate!—He cannot know her origin? Emily! Julia! surely you will inform him."

"We have not need, Lord Delamore," said Julia—"Mary did tell him all; but that was no help to stop him. He would love on; and will even marry Miss Mary Dungate, if she makes condescension to have him."

The surprise of Lord Delamore for some moments arrested his powers of articulation: at length, he said—"Mary is indeed perfect in loveliness, and every mental excellence; and yet I must wonder how Lord Castlehaven can thus degrade himself.—Love, I acknowledge, is a potent influence, and yet I know, I could not have done as he does."

"Indeed, but you could, and would," said Julia, playfully, "if you had found your Emily, whose one glance of her meek eyes, beautiful and timid, riveted your soul for ever. Oh! it was magic surely operated on your heart! You see, I very well remember for you; and had you found this formidable Emily, child to a cottager; for whom, some one had given the cultivation of all mental ex-

cellence, for making the companion of refinement, love would have said for pride—'Hush! hush! hushaby! lullaby! that is a good mighty fellow: go take sleep in all your solemn grandeur; and let me in comfort do what I have made determination of—Marry to be happy.'".

Lord Delamore's smile and eyes, now riveted upon his Emily, told at once that Julia's supposition was well founded.

After a thoughtful pause, Lord Delamore again broke silence. "Emily," he said, "if Mary really loves this most disinterested young man, you will of course assent to her union; and at Delamore castle it shall be celebrated in a manner the marriage of the child of your adoption ought to be solemnised; and as your child, Emily, I will be her father indeed. I once promised the dear girl herself that I would, and I will.—But, Emily, if her heart is not in this business, urge her not, I beseech you, to sacrifice her happiness at the shrine of ambition."

Lady Delamore was so powerfully affected by the kindness of the unconscious Lord Delamore for his child, that with the utmost

difficulty could she restrain her emotions; and Julia, to draw off the attention of Lord Delamore, while his Emily resumed her composure, read all of Lord Castlehaven's letter for him, except that part relative to Mary's apparently mysterious conduct, which she omitted, lest, by awakening his curiosity, she might lead him to enquiries, painful to Lady Delamore to elude; and by this narrative of constant disinterested love, the sympathy and admiration of Lord Delamore for Lord Castlehaven were so forcibly excited, that his cordiality towards him was too conspicuous to be disregarded, when that impatient lover arrived about nine o'clock, and was introduced to Lord Delamore.

Lord St. Orville, from sympathetic judgment, proved a profound prophet. Julia's letter reached Lord Castlehaven by the post, at ten o'clock; when he instantly gave orders for his immediate departure; then flew to Dover-street to Mrs. Fermor's, to know if Mary or her friends had any commands to Valincourt abbey; where he was flying to upon a visit to his charming cousin, who had promised him the assent

of Lord and Lady Delamore, to *his* marriage, without troubling Miss Mildmay for her interest with them; and without further delay he set out for Valincourt, where he was received with the most affecting kindness, by the lovely Countess Montalvan; with pleasing hospitality, by the Duke of Avondale; and with gratifying respect and cordiality, by the rest of the party; while Lady Delamore could scarcely restrain the impulse of her powerful gratitude, by clasping him to her bosom, and weeping her acknowledgments for his attachment to her insulated child; for his disinterested tenderness, which led him to offer the most honourable protection to her poor bereaved outcast.

Lord Castlehaven, independent of other adventitious attractions, could not fail, by his exterior, of interesting and pleasing. He still was like all his family, extremely handsome, although the torrid zone had faded his bloom, and given its sallow tints to his complexion. His manners were sweet and elegant; his conversation gifted by natural eloquence, and enriched from the funds

of superior intellect, and infinite information, was ever highly facinating; and he was then in his twenty-sixth year, being only eleven months younger than his lately deceased brother, whose dissipated life, and ruined finances, his appropriate valet, Mr. Sharp, bore testimony to, in the commencement of this work; and whose wife "the d—ned quizzical pattern of every female excellence," he had contrived to afflict with every mental misery, by her union with him.

In vain Julia looked for any striking similitude in her cousin to her well remembered father, whose portrait she examined, and re-examined, to find what she wished to perceive, a resemblance; but although Lord Castlehaven was very handsome, and finely formed, he was not cast in the same mould her father had been. From Lord Ashgrove he underwent the same anxious, fruitless scrutiny; but he bore his name, and his voice sounded many of Colonel De Clifford's tones, and they both resolved to love him with the most partial attachment.

Lord Castlehaven came prepared to be fascinated by his lovely cousin; and was

not disappointed. He blushed for his parent as he met her; and shame and sorrow trembled in his intelligent eyes, as he recollected the conduct of him from whom he sprung.

"The child of *my* father merits not such a reception as this, from the child of *yours*," he falteringly said.

"The nephew to my dear father," she promptly replied, "does claim, and shall have, every cordial attention and regard from me."

CHAPTER XXI.

On the succeeding morning, the whole of the Valincourt party proceeded to Delamore castle, for even Lady Theodosia no longer made an objection to returning there. The same guests they had left, Lord and Lady Delamore found upon their return, except Sir Lucius Clanwilliam, who, full of the charms of Miss Mildmay, was gone to Ireland, to work, if possible, upon the affection of an old uncle, upon whom rested all his dependance, to overlook the pride of ancestry, and permit his laying himself at her feet.

The still supposed Lady Selina attempted to receive Lord Delamore with her accustomed flattering and fawning attention; but so much of her arts were already discovered to him, she had totally lost all influence over his lordship; and his return to her servile adulation was dignified, formal, repellant civility. Julia, now, as Countess of Montalvan, attended by her illustrious grandfather,

and in the presence of Lord Ashgrove, received a widely different reception from this insolent woman, than she otherwise would have experienced. Julia possessed too much benevolence of disposition to receive the courtesy of any one, however insincere, with forbidding *hauteur;* but her heart recoiled from the vile impostor; and her meeting spoke no cordiality. Lady Delamore, in tender caution for her lord, did violence to her own feelings of indignation and horror, in her meeting this tool of her husband's mistress; but Lady Theodosia, influenced by her powerful feelings of abhorrence, exchanged nothing but scornful glances with her.

The moment their return to Dorsetshire had been determined upon, Lady Delamore had written a few hasty lines to her child, dictated by all of tenderness her maternal feelings could inspire, accompanied by a letter addressed to Lady Frances, and Mrs. Fermor, making it as her solemn request, "that no criminal prosecution should be entered into against Mrs. Monk or Mary Dungate, and imploring them, if they loved her, to bring her child without delay to her arms,

at Delamore castle."—In compliance with this latter request, those attached friends, with their amiable charge, set out as soon as possible for Delamore castle, where they arrived in two days after the noble owners of it.

The meeting between Lady Delamore and her long insulated daughter bids defiance to description:—both tremblingly gifted with sensibility, and both adoring each other, their feelings, in their first embrace of conscious consanguinity, almost subdued their every faculty in the recognition of heart to heart, in mother and child. Lady Selina's tender meeting also with her beloved brother and sister was affecting in an infinite degree, and while she had the glad congratulations of her heart to give to one, sympathizing sorrow beguiled her of her tears, for the altered looks and misfortunes of the other; but, when at length, in the presence of her unconscious father, and that with kindness he bid her welcome, "and to remember his promise, for he had not forgotten it," her trembling sensibility almost led her to betray her-

self, to fall at his feet, and implore the blessing she claimed.

Mary Mildmay had always been a considerable favourite of Lord Ashgrove's; therefore his kindness and attention to his lovely niece created no alarm in the bosom of the impostor; since she beheld in it nothing unusual: but in the eyes, voice, manner, and assiduities of Lord Castlehaven, she promptly discovered the ardent lover; and her breast was torn with rage, jealousy, and mortification.

The heart of Mary Dungate was well adapted for the coadjutor of Mrs. Monk; and she possessed an infinity of cunning, which aided her in their cruel, selfish politics; but she had not sufficient depth of understanding, or power enough over her passions, to render her profoundly artful; and her devotion to self, where her own comforts or wishes were threatened, often led her into inconsistencies in her insidiousness, which threatened to betray her, and taught her always to overlook consequences, in the gratification of her spleen, envy, or any selfish feeling.

It seemed a strange coincidence, that the only man who had ever made any serious impression upon the heart of this worthless woman should be Lord Castehaven; who, when Captain De Clifford had captivated her impostor ladyship, at a ball at Exeter, when, in defiance of every apprehension of offending Lord Delamore, and forfeiting her expectations of all his personal wealth, she wrote to this young officer, "frankly confessing her passion, offering him her hand, and announcing to him, that at the death of Lord Delamore her fortune would be at least three hundred thousand pounds:" but the humble Mary's charms had then made their indelible impression upon the heart of the disinterested De Clifford, who, with all qualifying respect and gratitude, declined the flattering and advantageous offer of the fair lady; and when at Valincourt, he found himself enrolled in the party for Delamore castle, he would have felt some delicate scruples about going thither, had not Lady Selina been married, and, as he supposed, gone to the habitation of her husband; and the most delicate way of proceeding, when

he unexpectedly met her there, was, he thought, to affect forgetfulness of the past; but she well remembered it, and found, when she saw him, the impression which he had made revive with unabated fervor.

Sir Lucius Clanwilliam she had made an unsuccessful effort to attract, merely because it was *eclat* to be admired, and followed by him. The innocent being she was essentially injuring foiled her in the attempt by her superior attractions; and this detested creature had, seriously too, captivated the man, whom she herself had been rejected by, and now almost infuriated by mortification, envy, and jealousy, she seemed to lose all recollection of the precipice upon which she could not but know she tottered in Lord Delamore's favour; and gave free indulgence to the rancour of her heart, by every insolence of conduct and malicious sarcasm which she could level at the still styled Mary; which that amiable young woman bore with the most striking forbearance.

It was agreed upon, by all the friends of Lord Delamore, who were in the secret of

the vile imposture, to disclose by degrees to him the impositions practised by his diabolical mistress; and Lady Frances undertook to remove the film from her brother's eyes; and show him the deformities of vice, to which he had flown for consolation in the moment he experienced the first disappointment his life had ever known, that of discovering his wife had married him solely in obedience to her father.

It was the day after the arrival of Lady Selina Southerland, and her friends from London, as the family were sitting after dinner, that the impostor's phrensied jealousy led her into an insolent sarcasm, delivered in a half whisper to Miss Modely, relative to "Moll Dungate's *debut* in London as a countess," which so incensed Lady Frances, that she resolved at once to humble her; and suddenly she said—

"Pray, Madam, what was the name of the parson at Cripplegate, who married your friends, the Sharklands?"

The impostor started in dismay, and the pale hue of terror sat upon her counte-

nance as falteringly she said—" I know not whom you mean, Lady Frances."

" I can assist your memory, Madam, which it is singular should prove so defective, when you were bridemaid upon the happy occasion; and, as well as Mrs. Dungate, signed your name in the parish register, the seventh of March, 1797, as witness to the marriage of Eusebius Sharkland and Dorinda Monk."

The name of Sharkland had arrested Lord Delamore's attention. This was the name of a man whom Mrs. Monk had told him was her brother in law; and who his lordship therefore permitted to reside in her house as her steward, or factotum:—but the horror and dismay his sister's subsequent intelligence of perfidy in a woman, whom he believed, fervently attached to him; with this further instance of treachery and dissimulation in his child, seemed for some moments to suspend every faculty: but soon indignation roused the energies of his mind; and his wounded pride gave him firmness; or at least, if not sterling fortitude, a good imi-

tation; that enabled him, even though his colour varied each moment, and that his frame was paralysed with agitation, to continue at table without betraying his feelings to his guests.

But firmness to support this discovery of the secret marriage of Mrs. Monk (which, with other important communications, the wife of William Smith had disclosed to Lady Frances, and the injured Lady Selina's counsel) was not for the appalled impostor, who now felt the direful conviction of her interest in the affection of Lord Delamore being for ever blasted; and, trembling in terror lest this discovery should only prove a prelude to a more dreadful one, she could not long sustain her place in company, but was compelled to retire, to give free indulgence to those sensations guilt is wounded by in the moment of detection.

As soon as the gentlemen withdrew from the dining hall, Lord Delamore summoned Sir Charles Stratton to a private conference, when with all the kindness commiseration for this self-made unfortunate husband inspired, imparted to him, the long series of

artful deceptions his wife had practised; and how, through hers, and the now detected, infamous Monk's artful train of selfish politics, he had been so long and painfully estranged from his ever-adored Emily.

"Acquainted now with all this long system of perfidy to an indulgent father, you cannot, Charles, condemn me for forbidding my unworthy child my presence for ever," said Lord Delamore. "As speedily as possibility can admit of it, take the wife your ruthless destiny has given you from beneath my roof, never to return to it; but you, unfortunate young man, shall find a higher place in my regard, because my child has made shame and misery for you. Ever in my house you shall find a cordial welcome; ever from my friendship all you can wish or claim."

Sir Charles, overwhelmed with the most painful feelings, hastened to the apartments of his wife to announce to her the decree of her justly incensed father, and to upbraid her for her arts and treachery; but even this detection of her infamous conduct had not power to subdue her spirit; and she

received his reproaches with violence, little short of phrenzy, and more horror-struck and disgusted even than before: he fled from her to the sanctuary of his own dressing-room to deplore his dissipated follies, which had given him such a wife.

The instant Sir Charles quitted the library after his distressing conference with Lord Delamore, the anxious Lady Delamore entered it. The moment she appeared, her agitated husband placed his hands before his eyes, exclaiming—

"Oh! Emily! Emily! leave me to my misery. Come not near your, weak, your credulous, your guilty husband.—Let me not behold your heavenly countenance; the angelic purity it speaks will thrill barbed arrows through my heart, in its tacit reproaches for having flown from you to that perfidious woman whose dupe for years I have been; still, still, neglecting, insulting, suspecting you.——Oh! Emily!—Leave me! leave me!"

"Indeed I will not, Theodosius," said Lady Delamore, in a voice of penetrating tenderness, and soothing sympathy, gently

taking his hand with an affectionate pressure, and seating herself beside him. "Am I not your wife—the beloved of your heart? And now I know my influence upon that invaluable heart I will not leave you.—In the moment of distress can any consolation equal mine?—None none, my Theodosius, but that derived from heaven. To me no voice now can sound the soothing tones of comfort with half the magic of my husband's."

Lord Delamore burst into tears, and sobbed convulsively: his Emily gently drew his head to her, placed it on her sympathizing bosom, and tenderly kissed his forehead.

"*There,*" she sweetly said, "I have brought you, Theodosius, to that pillow of consolation the wedded man should ever find in the moment of affliction."

"Oh heaven!" he cried, "and I fled from it in the first moment of mine to vice; and found, as I merited, misery most direful."

"Let us now only think of that, my beloved," said Lady Delamore, "as of the

frightful vision of a long, dark night of error. Now we are awakened to other scenes.—We have opened our eyes upon the pleasing prospect which autumn yields; and although the spring of our days we lost in a troubled sleep, we may find many charms in autumn, and bask in the mild sun-beams of mutual confidence and affection, although the sun of our love has past its zenith. Have we not now sweet prospects to look to, Theodosius, in the happiness of our adored, inestimable children?"

"Oh Emily!" exclaimed her anguished husband, "what a chord you have sounded! Are not the pangs of the perfidy I am smarting from direfully augmented by the treachery of one of those children; and did not I, infatuated monster, take my own child, then pure in innocence, in guileless innocence, to the house of vice, to have her mind perverted? Oh! Emily! Emily! mine was the fault of all the treachery of my child!"—and Lord Delamore sobbed and groaned in mental agony.

"The pangs you suffer from perfidy and art, unparalleled, would indeed know a

direful increase, my beloved," said Lady Delamore, were they augmented by the treachery of your child."

"I understand you not—What can my Emily mean?"

"That I have consolation to give you in the information that no child of ours mined for our disunion, no child of ours was fostered in the bosom of Mrs. Monk, to wound us by art, by fraud, by treachery unequalled."

"If you love me, Emily, to the fact, to the fact; and torture me not by this inexplicability."

"The wife of poor Charles is happily for us no child of ours, my Theodosius."

Lord Delamore instantly sunk upon his knees, and breathed the most animated thanksgivings from his panting heart to the throne of Heaven for such a mercy; and when his pious gratitude for having so foul a blot wiped from his family, and for the happiness of knowing his Emily and himself were not parents to a monster of mental deformity, and that he had not caused the morals of his own child to be corrupt-

ed, he entreated to hear the history of this imposition, and its providential detection.

" You remember, Theodosius, the nurse who suckled our poor first babe.—She was a most pleasing, pretty, young woman; very specious in her manners; and although most highly recommended to us, was a frail sister of Mrs. Monk's, the pretended wife of Sharkland, seduced by him, and by him abandoned; and in the first career of vice, in these well-assorted sisters, a woman named Mary Dungate was their domestic, and mutual interest bound them together in a league of convenient attachment.

" I almost tremble to proceed, Lord Delamore, lest you should learn to hate me, for being the cause of such direful mischief, of so many years of anguish to you; for I was the cause of all: I lit the torch of jealousy and enmity in the bosom of the mistress you forsook, for me; and influenced by those potent powers, she determined to make for me a life of misery. Inspired by her hatred of me, she formed her plots, and gave me a child, who by being

in her power to ruin, became devoted to her, and who by training up to wind into your confidence and affection, she taught to effect my wretchedness.

"Her subtle sister, Monk, therefore contrived to get into our service, to suckle our poor devoted innocent. Mary Dungate was mother to an infant the age of ours; and when opportunely for this atrocious plot, we were summoned to the couch of my dying father, and that my mother entreated Beville to accompany us; the long meditated plan was put in execution:—my sleeping cherub, blooming in all the loveliness of health, was given to Molly Dungate, who left a serpent in her stead to sting us, and poison all our peace. The infant impostor was then sickening of a scarlet fever her twin-brother had just expired of. This illness, which Monk was not aware of, aided her designs, by accounting naturally for the alteration in the child; and very nearly saved her any further iniquity, by terminating the life of her rival.

"At the age of fourteen, the hitherto

unconscious impostor was made acquainted with her origin, when the bad properties of her heart leading her to wish a continuation of the deception, to secure to her all the pomp and affluence she enjoyed, as the supposed Lady Selina Southerland, induced her to be firm in her devotion to Mrs. Monk, and to come without hesitation into all her schemes, lest she should betray her and rob her of all her greatness."

The agitated Lord Delamore listened to this recital with convulsive tremor; and now with a groan of agony from his heart, exclaimed, "But our child, my Emily! what, what, became of her?"

"Oh, Providence was merciful to us, Theodosius, and inspired the avarice of Mary Dungate to murmur at supporting a child that was not her own, and happily influenced by the idea of the lawful parents having the best right to maintain it, brought our cherub to me as an object for our orphan asylum, when her heaven-directed resemblance to her father———"

"Oh! merciful Providence!—Then was the lovely being I was led by the malice of those fiends of iniquity to bereave of your protection, my own child!—The child of my Emily, and I deprived her of protection!" Lord Delamore now, with a deep groan from his heart, threw himself upon his knees to Lady Delamore, to implore her pardon for his cruelty to her lovely child; while Lady Delamore, powerfully affected, entreated him to rise, with such persuasive tenderness, that he at length complied, when bursting into tears, he threw himself upon her neck, and weeping like a child, entreated to hear how the providential discovery had been made. Lady Delamore, repressing her tears of sympathy, gave a narrative of all that our readers have long been participators in the knowledge of; and informed her husband that all she had just related had transpired through the confession of the mother of the impostor: and scarcely had she come to a period, when Lord Delamore, almost phrenzied with horror and indignation, started from her arms, to issue a warrant for the apprehen-

sion of the vile Monk, "to have her dragged to prison to receive condign punishment for stealing his lovely, amiable child;" and vehemently he declared "that he would instantly prosecute the infamous Mary as an impostor."

"Never, never, my beloved Theodosius, shall you do either," said Lady Delamore mildly, but firmly.

"By Heaven I will," exclaimed his lordship.

Lady Delamore now sunk upon her knees before her almost infuriated husband.

"Now in my turn," she said, "I kneel to you, and make it my earnest, solemn request, that you will adopt no vindictive measures. If you love me, my Theodosius, you will listen to my pleadings."

"If I love you! Oh Emily!" he exclaimed, in a voice of agitated tenderness; and flying to her, he snatched her into his arms.

"Think not," said Lady Delamore, affected now to tears, "that I can ever bear to see your conduct become the subject of

public animadversion; when the sensitive feelings of your susceptible heart which led you on to err, unknown to those who could scrutinize your conduct, they would say 'you merited the perfidy you met with;' not judge with candour that guileless mind, where treachery never finding entrance to teach the sympathetic recognition of its form, was left open to the specious impositions of its dissimulating arts.

"Almost as little could I endure to have the woman (however unworthy she has proved herself,) who once possessed your invaluable affections, dragged to prison and tried as a malefactor; and less could I brook to have the being we fostered as our child, whom we cherished in infancy, whom you fondly regarded, and whom, believing her my child, I could not hate, forced into a court of justice as a culprit, amenable to the laws of her country, which she had transgressed.—Oh no, my beloved; inflict not this grief upon your Emily's heart.—Vengeance is not ours.—Providence has been most merciful in giving us

our own child to rear in virtue; and in now graciously permitting this discovery to be made. Let us in gratitude humbly emulate the principles taught us by divine goodness, and forgive those who have trespassed against us; and teach our hearts to pray for their lives to be extended, that Heaven may, in its kindness, inspire them with contrition, and save them by repentance."

"Oh! Emily! Emily!" faltered out the sensibly affected Lord Delamore, again throwing himself upon her neck to weep his emotion. "My sapient, virtuous, pious guide!—Thus you would spare the fame of a husband who made you wretched—A harsh, an inconsistent, a jealous, tyrannic husband!"

"Hush, hush, Lord Delamore," she tenderly exclaimed; "I will listen to no reflections thrown upon my beloved, now afflicted husband."

"If my self-upbraidings pain my Emily, I will cease to utter them; but confine them to my heart with the remembrance of your

forgiving kindness, that leads you on to spare those atrocious miscreants, who planned your misery, and lured me to inflict it.

"Yes, yes, my treasure, Providence was merciful to you, because you merited its mercy. Your benevolence led you to form the institution to afford an asylum to the unprotected children of others; and through that laudable action of your humanity, you were led to be the protectress of your own innocent; to screen her from vice, to cherish her in your maternal bosom, to rear her in reciprocal affection; while I——"

"Hush!" said Lady Delamore, placing her hand before his mouth to stop him. Rapturously he kissed the beauteous barrier; and when again she permitted him to speak, he exclaimed——

"Pattern of every excellence! You who never erred! how unworthy am I to be beloved by you!"

"Never erred! oh Theodosius!—Believe, my husband, I am not so much exalted above you:—for I have erred. It is time

that you should, in proof of mutual confidence, hear my confession; and I trust when I have told you, that your jealousy of my affection was not unfounded, you will not love me less, for—— Nay, Theodosius, tremble not thus with such direful agitation. Your rival lived and died unconscious of my unfortunate partiality."

"It was at the period, my beloved, when you first left me at Delamore castle; and that I knew you forsook me to go to Monk; for just at that time I first learned you had taken her again under your protection; and full of grief at the conviction this seemed to give me, of my having lost your affection, and harbouring much resentment, awakened by mortified pride at your thus providing yourself with a permanent favourite, my bosom was raising up a barrier against its long softening tenderness for you, when my brother arrived, after a two years' absence, and unfortunately brought Frederick De Clifford, the father of our beloved Julia, hither to visit me. Mr. De Clifford was then an ob-

ject of peculiar interest from his own heroic deeds in arms, and private excellence, and from his father's unnatural conduct. The pensive melancholy of his countenance was a dangerous contemplation for a susceptible young woman; but although it taught me to pity him, it would have led me no further; but my infant cherub, my Alfred, fascinated him. Oh, surely, that attachment was from presentiment, that our boy, my Theodosius, was to prove the protector of his own insulated child. The attachment became mutual, and Alfred almost lived in the arms of De Clifford; and while fondled and caressed by him, I have mentally exclaimed, 'Oh, if my lord would thus caress my cherub; was he thus domestic, how I should adore him!'

"This was a dangerous suggestion:—the danger that led to the destruction of my peace for years.—I dwelt on the idea until the object who awakened it stole imperceptibly into my unsuspecting affections. I to him also was an object of interest. As a deserted wife, he pitied me; and often,

most often, I caught him stealing glances of pensive commiseration at me. To find I had interested him gave pleasure to my unconscious heart; but I saw not the dreadful precipice upon which I tottered, until one day, as I entered this room, I beheld De Clifford, standing with his arms folded, gazing at yonder portrait of me: he sighed as he gazed; and at length I heard him softly articulate, 'Oh! lovely, interesting being, why was not I doomed to constitute your happiness?'

"The joy which thrilled through my heart at this moment was quickly succeeded by a chill of direful horror. Precipitately I fled to my own apartment, and in tears of anguish questioned my heart; found how certain was its weakness; and the moment I could command sufficient firmness to execute it, I sought my brother; reposed every secret of my heart in his sympathising breast, and entreated him, as he prized my peace, to take his too dangerous friend instantly, and for ever, from my sight."

"The dismayed Ashgrove, as speedily as

possibility would admit of it, complied.—To secure myself from suspicion of the fact entering the mind of Mr. De Clifford, I was compelled to endure a parting interview.—In it I did not betray myself; and I never saw De Clifford more.

"Although I had not a hope to rest upon, although I considered my unfortunate attachment criminal, and that I exerted all the energies of my mind to combat it, yet my heart long retained the involuntary impression; since pity for his subsequent misfortunes still softened and nourished it. In all that time of my heart's wandering from its duty, you, Theodosius, made not one attempt to recal it. When you sought its tenderness you promptly found it; and long my heart has told me, had you condescended to make the attempt in the first year of our marriage, it had been inevitably, unalienably yours.

"You now know every secret of my bosom; and, alas! my husband, you find I have not been free from error; for——"

Lord Delamore caught her to his breast, and pressed her to it with energy. "Oh!

Emily!" he exclaimed, "miracle of purity! pattern of every excellence! your heart only strayed to rise superior in the magnanimous effort it made to secure its innocence.——Oh! Emily! my treasure, how unworthy have I proved myself of such a wife as mine!—My misconduct, my base, cruel, absurd dereliction of you, caused that error upon which your purity arose more sublimated, more transcendent.—I, I, caused you all the pangs your guileless heart endured, from inauspicious love.—Oh! forgive me! forgive me, Emily!" And now Lord Delamore wept in such penitential anguish, that his Emily was almost convulsed with sobs of sympathy.

At length, the mental agony of Lord Delamore subsiding into more tranquillized calmness, he said—

"Mark, my now own Emily, the unerring justice of Almighty Providence!—In the first disappointment which ever tortured my heart, I flew to vice for consolation; and vice led me at once from happiness, blighted my hopes, embittered my life, taught me estrangement from those I most

fondly loved, and lured me on to be the cause of misery to those I ought to have shielded from every ill. You, Emily, in the moment of temptation, heroically, virtuously, resisted it, by conduct most exalted; and in recompense, the child of the amiable, unfortunate De Clifford, was the very being deputed by Heaven to chase every sorrow from your heart, and lead you to every earthly blessing."

CHAPTER XXII.

THE self-upbraidings of Lord Delamore for the errors he had committed, causing so much misery to his beloved family, such a direful consequence to his eldest child, with the pain of humiliation he endured for being so long the credulous dupe of the most consummate art and hypocrisy, could not fail, in a bosom of such susceptibility, to affect his frame. His night therefore was so restless, and so many symptoms indicative of serious indisposition evinced themselves to alarm his anxious Emily, that she arose at early dawn, and dispatched an express for Doctor Harlow.

Lord Delamore was found by the doctor in the commencement of a nervous fever, which made rapid advances; and several weeks elapsed before he was pronounced in a state of perfect convalescence. During his illness he experienced the most tender, anxious attention from his almost heart-

rived Emily, and his attached family, highly gratifying to his affections, but still increasing his mental upbraidings for occasioning those who in defiance of his former unkindness could so love him such years of misery. In the attentions of his long-insulated child, he beheld the most tender, dutiful solicitude for his recovery, which whilst it tortured his heart by remorse for the sufferings he had caused her, bound her as firmly in his regard as those two children he had known through life were his.

The illness of Lord Delamore retarded the nuptials of our hero and heroine; but the moment his lordship was able to travel, the wedding-party set out for Valincourt abbey, where in a few days after the happy Julia was united for ever to her young protector. At their nuptials were present only the nearest relatives and friends of Lord St. Orville and Lady Montalvan; and among the latter Julia invited her beloved and delighted friend, Mrs. Goodwin, who received the most flattering and pleasing attention from all who loved our heroine, and

that comprised every individual assembled at Valincourt.

In a few hours after the nuptial ceremony was finely and affectingly pronounced by Doctor Sydenham, (now happy in the choice the favourite of his fond affection had at length fortunately made) the bride and bridegroom were deserted by all their friends, who leaving them at Valincourt, returned to their respective homes, or to Delamore castle, to prepare for the nuptials of Lady Selina Southerland and Lord Castlehaven.

Although the disinterestedness of Lord Castlehaven's attachment had been fully demonstrated, our readers cannot suppose he felt any thing like concern upon the discovery that the lovely being he so fondly loved was in rank equal to his own, and that her marriage portion would enable him to make a more ample provision for his younger children.

When the discovery had been made to Lord Delamore of the imposture, it was judged expedient no longer to delay imparting the horrid intelligence to the un-

fortunate Sir Charles Stratton. Lords Ashgrove, St. Orville, and De Lisle, undertook to do it, and though they imparted all with kindness and caution, they nearly annihilated the senses of the dismayed young man for ever: but when the first violence of his horror had in some degree subsided, he intreated his uncle "to go to the infamous and ungovernable woman he had the misery to call wife, and tell to her, 'that her impositions were discovered, and that she was an alien to his presence for ever.'"

"She plighted her vows to me," he said, "under a fictitious name, and in the eye of the law our marriage is deemed illegal, but I plighted mine to the woman, and not her appellation, and in the decision of my conscience I am her wedded husband; and although she is my disgrace, my abhorrence, I never can seek to annul the marriage; and however in future life my heart may be attached, still must I consider I am already married. If there is any offspring to arise from this ill-fated union, the law will consider it illegitimate, and my patrimony it cannot inherit; but I shall feel I am its

father, and will strive with all my powers to provide for it. Tell her, I entreat you, my dear uncle, 'that if there is any such being to be brought into existence, that I shall claim it the moment it is born.' I will make her an allowance as the woman I consider as my wife; but she must find out a residence for herself, as she shall disgrace no roof of mine by dwelling beneath it. As to myself I will hasten to my unfortunate brother in Dantzic, and strive with him to forget my cares, or with him learn firmness to bear miseries inflicted by our own misconduct."

The panic-struck impostor quitted Delamore castle the very night she learned from Lord Ashgrove that she was detected, and fled to the house of Mrs. Monk, alias Mrs. Sharkland, for an asylum. Great was the degree of terror and consternation she brought with her to that dwelling of vice. Trembling in fear of condign punishment, the Sharklands, and the *ci-devant* Lady Selina, absconded with every valuable they found portable before morning. They fled to London, and as speedily as apprehension

prompted them, embarked for America, where, shortly after their arrival, Sharkland robbed his wife and her *protegée* of every valuable they possessed, and returned to England to spend his booty with his wife's confidential Abigaile; leaving her and Lady Stratton to experience all the calamities of want, ere the emissaries of Sir Charles could trace her ladyship out, to learn was he likely to become a father from this inauspicious marriage, and to bring her what was due of the allowance her husband had settled upon her.

Learning from the agents of Sir Charles, that there was no criminal prosecution to be carried on against them, these abandoned women returned to Europe, and in London took a house, where they soon embarked together, in every species of vice most congenial to their inclinations; and by all that was inimical to the constitution, in a career of infamy, Lady Stratton, at the moment we are closing these memoirs, had reduced herself to the last stage of a pulmonary complaint, which baffled all medicinal aid.

Sir Charles Stratton, according to his in-

tentions, flew to his brother, whom he found a perfect shadow of his former self, still in all the disconsolation of unsubdued love for Julia.

When Lord St. Orville had confided our heroine to his care, Fitzroy was serious in his honourable intentions; but the moment he beheld his charge, fascinated by her charms, he determined to become perfidious to his confiding friend. The rectitude of Mr. Goodwin foiled his first project, which had resolved upon her seduction; and when he met her at Z, the elegance of her manners, with her increased charms of beauty, by augmenting his passion, led him into the determination of making her his wife; and this determination was fixed after some thoughtful pauses of indecision, at the dinner of Lord Gaythorn at Z.

When drawn from our heroine by the misrepresentation of Lady Enderfield and Lord Gaythorn, Fitzroy was at Springcourt, as much a dupe to passion as to the blandishments of Lady Enderfield; and he disregarded the intelligence of his aunt, (because she told him little that he did not already know)

until his visit to Delamore castle, when the thraldom of Lady Enderfield was past; and that the immaculate Julia resumed her full influence over his heart; then he sought for proof of the infamy of Lady Enderfield, not for his own conviction, but to permit him, with apparent honour, to break through engagements formed in a moment of infatuation. The release from his engagement he had in possession, even while paying his devoirs to Mrs. Wellford; but still unacknowledged, because then he could not forsake the society of Julia for his libertine pursuit, without awakening suspicion; but the dreaded return of Lord St. Orville led him promptly to announce its arrival, and to use every argument to persuade our heroine into becoming his, ere his perfidy to his amiable cousin should be disclosed to her.

From the moment the Marquis of Penmorva was discarded by Julia, his grief and despair seemed to acquire strength every succeeding hour. That he had brought his own calamities on himself was a conviction that increased his affliction; and the

knowledge that he was despised by Julia De Clifford added to his misery.

The arrival of his brother did not minorate the Marquis of Penmorva's affliction. Sir Charles pitied him; for he was instructed by sympathy from feeling Julia's fascination himself; but knew not how to teach him to recover the esteem of Lady Montalvan, and without that the Marquis of Penmorva felt life a torment.

Shortly after Sir Charles joined his brother in Poland, they were both summoned to Vienna, to attend the nuptials of their sister with the amiable Lord Francis Lorrain.

The Marquis of Penmorva had had a sister, one year his senior, who had been gifted by nature with uncommon endowments; but annexed to which was an unfortunate sensitive sensibility, hostile to her happiness. Early in life this amiable young woman imbibed an unconquerable predilection for the friend of her brother, Lord Francis Lorrain: quickly she saw it was unreturned; and her secret she fast locked within her bosom. About the period she met with this disappointment of the heart, she discovered in

looking over the English peerage the infamy of her mother. This was a dire wound, that rankled in her heart, for the mother she adored she could no longer estimate. About the same unfortunate time she discovered the atheism of her favourite brother; her spirits sunk beneath such accumulated horrors, and her health rapidly declined. Lord Francis, about the same period, came to make a visit at her father's; and in that imbecility of mind her illness caused, her partiality betrayed itself. Lord Francis, shocked by a belief, that this partiality had undermined her constitution; in the enthusiasm of compassion, affected a return to her attachments; professed an ardent passion for her; and implored her to be his. Miss Fitzroy believed him; and his tender assiduities proved consolation to her, in her dying moments. A very few hours before her dissolution, she disclosed to Lord Francis one of the direful causes that had rived her heart; and implored him, "as he loved her, as he prized her last blessing, to convert her brother."

This request of the expiring Miss Fitzroy's

it was that made Lord Francis so anxious for her brother's union with Julia De Clifford, whom the moment he beheld at church he knew was innately pious, and doubted not she would reclaim the infidel. This request it was that made him yield at once to his friend every opportunity of wooing Julia, although he himself was fascinated into love by her. Borne on the wings of this promise, he flew to Vienna, obtained most readily the consent of Lord and Lady Horatio to their son's marriage with Julia, and sent it by a special messenger to Fitzroy; but at Vienna Lord Francis was fated to find the antidote to his passion for our heroine in the surviving sister of Fitzroy, whom his lordship had left an unformed girl of fourteen; and now found a young woman, sprouted into all her mother's beauty without her vanity, or love of dissipation, with all her sister's mental endowments; but with a lively animated disposition, congenial to his own, and with so much bewitching *naïveté*, so like our heroine's, that Lord Francis, with a view of weakening his hopeless passion, in seeking to admire her,

even more than her attractions seemed at first to claim, soon became seriously captivated, proved a successful woer; and the Duke and Duchess of Bridgetower readily bestowed their fascinating daughter upon the man of her affections.

Lord Francis and Lady Emily Lorrain now with affectionate zeal lured the Marquis of Penmorva into making one of their family circle, when gently winding themselves into every folding of his heart, they taught him to believe the esteem of Lady Montalvan was not irrecoverable, and that the reformed Penmorva might look for the blessing of her friendship. To recover that blessing he set about the effort to believe in those sacred truths he had long derided. His affectionate sister, and his amiable brother-in-law, were indefatigable in their toils to assist him, and in the moment we are coming to the termination of this work, his intentions of serious reformation are sincere.

Lord Glenbrook, appalled with the most direful horror which could agitate the heart of man, upon finding from his adored wife's

last words, "that his dreadful murder of her brother was no secret to her," after her manes were consigned to the tomb of his ancestors, hastened to the continent, with the delusive hope of flying from himself; but soon a letter from the Duke of Avondale, announcing to him, "that Ferdinand Stukely had betrayed him, and that his villainy to Lady Adelaide was disclosed to the world," bereft him of his senses; and in the delirium his shame at this public detection overwhelmed him with, revealed all his crimes in his ravings, and at length, as a climax to his wickedness, bereft himself of life.

Lady Fontsevern, in her haste to exhibit herself as the Countess of Montalvan, forgetting the decorum of respect to the memory of the so lately deceased countess, went in all the pomp of woe to court, to be presented upon coming to the title of Montalvan, that with surpassing *eclat* she might appear at the approaching birth-day, and in defiance of her father's fractures, which she received an account of the morning of the birth-day, she proceeded to the drawing-room, where, as she expected, her beauty,

her dress, her equipage, were the admiration or envy of every beholder; but this premature speed to display her newly acquired greatness, and to eclipse every one, only made her humiliation more public. In a very few days the claims of the poor girl, "who went about answering advertisements, as an object of charity," superseded hers, took the countess's coronet from her brow, and obliged her to sink back, into the comparatively little Baroness of Fontsevern.

Lord Westbourn was some time ere he recovered from the serious effects of his overturn, and during that long confinement he had opportunity to reflect upon the consequence of his unparental conduct to his child; which, with no one amiable or equitable inducement to actuate him, accelerated a discovery that effectually deprived his family of the wealth which he had ignobly plotted to attain; but reflection suited him not, and the moment he was able to travel, he proceeded to Paris, to forget his disappointment there.

Ferdinand Stukely had every promised reward from the Duke of Avondale, and every

care in his illness which Lady Montalvan could procure for him; but he only lived to the following May.

Barbara Stukely, the moment she found her husband had betrayed every thing to the Duke of Avondale, fled in terror from his grace's vengeance, and took up her abode in London, in some of those haunts of vice which disgrace the metropolis; and as a receiver of stolen goods, got entangled with a horde of rogues, upon whom the long suspended sword of justice is at length about to fall.

Nothing intervened to delay the marriage of Lord Castlehaven and Lady Selina Southerland, which was celebrated under the most auspicious hopes of happiness; and every passing hour has only since added to the conviction that those hopes were not delusive.

As time stole from the sincere grief of Lady Theodosia Southerland, Lord De Lisle imperceptibly entwined himself into her affections, and at length regained the full dominion her heart had, for the greatest part of her life, panted to bestow upon him. In

about a year after the death of her beloved Mandeville, she permitted her amiable cousin to talk of love to her; and, at the expiration of another year, she, under the auspices of their mutual friends, bestowed her hand upon him, giving, and receiving, in this union, all that happiness herself and adoring husband merited.

We trust our readers are now too well acquainted with the excellence of our heroine's heart, to suppose she forgot the inestimable Goodwins in her sudden elevation. No, the gratitude and affection of Julia De Clifford to them broke forth in the Countess of Montalvan, with renovated energy! She was well aware, that the age of Mr. Goodwin, as well as the long disuse which adversity had occasioned, unfitted him to sustain, without injury to his health, the toils of trade, such as he now carried on. She knew that he was passionately fond of farming, and perfectly understood it; and promptly she made over to him a most valable farm, beautifully situated about a mile from Valincourt, settling it upon Mr. and Mrs. Goodwin, for their joint lives; to

devolve to the survivor, for theirs, and then to descend to their heirs for ever. The house Julia had enlarged, and considerably improved; furnished it completely, both usefully and ornamentally, in a beautiful style of simple elegance. The farm, cellars, and store-rooms, she had stocked with every requisite; the side-board supplied with every useful article of plate; the presses for house-linen entirely filled, and named the premises *Sans Souci*, before she presented the deed of gift to her beloved friends, to whom her first visit, as Countess of Montalvan, she ever made in London, was paid; and not only in essential kindness, but in the gratifying ones, of the pleasing little attentions of society they ever experienced from her.

To the great joy and gratification of the blood of the O'Neils, and Biddy O'Connor (who herself amply experienced the kindness and gratitude of Julia), our heroine persuaded Mr. Goodwin to resign his business in favour of Mr. S. Goodwin's son, who was just then out of his time, with an eminent bookseller. The stock, and goodwill

of the business, she had fairly valued, paid the price herself, in remuneration for the benevolent care the good apothecary had taken of the refractory Mrs. St. Clair in her dreadful illness, and of herself, in her dangerous fever, and lodged the sum in the funds, for the children of her own Mr. Goodwin. She now also arranged, for her dear Rosa, to be initiated in every mental and elegant accomplishment, as she doubted not, from her attractive beauty, she would marry highly. The allowance of her friend Charles she made a liberal increase to, and told his happy parents no expense whatever was to be spared by her, and her equally interested St. Orville, in the education of Charles; as they looked, with every pleasing expectation, to him, as the future private preceptor of their boys.

Every individual belonging to the inestimable Crofts, the Duke of Avondale, and Lady Montalvan amply provided for, with all the liberality of ardent gratitude; and although his sweet little *Missy* rendered him completely independent, he would

not quit his station of butler at Valincourt.

"No," he said, "I spent my youth with your dear father; I will pass my age with you, a delighted witness of your happiness, and in the service of my beloved young lady I will die."

"Then, then," replied Julia, sensibly affected, "I must look out for the house of comfort in the neighbourhood, quite close, for your good wife and family, since, no longer can I bear to have your estrangements from them, by your attachment to my dear, own father, and to me."

In the service of Lady Montalvan, Crofts, at length most happy, therefore continued, treated by her, and her St. Orville, and all their dear relatives (who knew her incalculable obligations to him), not as a domestic, but as a most valuable friend.

Little Edward Julia took to her own peculiar protection, treating him with every kindness, and improving his capacious mind judiciously, and cautiously; meaning, (since the excellence of his heart seemed to equal that of his understanding), in future

time he should be the companion of her boys, and by his superior acquirements lead them on to knowledge by emulation.

William Smith was amply provided for, by Lord and Lady Delamore, for the active part which he took, in leading to fully substantiating their daughter's birth. With his iniquitous wife he was not long tormented; apprehension of punishment, when she found that direful imposture, in which she bore a part, was detected, brought on a nervous malady, that in a few months terminated her existence; and although deprived of her annuities from her daughter, and Mrs. Monk, the benevolent William suffered her not to want any medicinal aid, or other care, which his now well-furnished purse could supply her with.

The fishermen who saved the life of Lord St. Orville received a remuneration from Lord Delamore, equal in magnitude to the service he considered they had rendered him; and the comforts now diffused to every individual of their family evinced how considerable the portion of his lordship's gratitude had been; while Lady Delamore,

by requesting Neptune from the Jones' as being the agent led by Julia to save her beloved husband's life, and making him the companion of her solitary rambles, and her chief favourite among the material world, gave the most tender satisfaction to the heart of her adoring lord.

Mrs. Fermor found the friendship of Lord and Lady Delamore increased considerably to her, by her kindness to her insulated daughter; while upon Mrs. Spencer his lordship settled a very handsome annuity, to evince his gratitude for her rearing his child, to be an honour and comfort to him; and neither Mrs. Fermor or Mrs. Spencer had ever reason to complain of the animated sensibility of Lady Castlehaven, for their never forgotten goodness to her.

It was some time ere the sensitive feelings of Lord Delamore recovered the shock of finding himself the dupe of such consummate perfidy, and proving the cause of so many years of misery to his adored family. Had it not been for his own errors, he might have been one of the most happy husbands, and fathers, in existence. Only for the

mercy of Heaven to his Emily, what might not the fate of their stolen child have proved? The one idea filled his heart with all the melancholy of fond regret, the other with all the horrors of narrowly escaped calamity; and both combined, gave to his countenance, his voice, and mien, so much of the tone of mental anguish, that the sympathy it awakened in the bosom of his Emily evinced itself so forcibly, that it at length aroused him from his growing despondence, in the full and rapturous conviction, that his wife's happiness could now only proceed from his. Under the influence of this precious idea, he eagerly sought for cheerfulness, that his Emily might smile; and turning from the gloom of painful retrospections, he saw all the happiness which now surrounded him; and grateful for blessings which he felt, that only now he merited, he believed he alone could evince his thankfulness for all, by shewing how sweetly cheerful was the heart, how serene the aspect of gratitude for blessings dispensed by Heaven; and now, after so many years of disunited misery, the happiness of

Lord and Lady Delamore in each other, and in their amiable, dutiful, and affectionate children, glided on without a cloud to shade its sunbeams.

Julia soon became the idol of her grandfather's and Lord Ashgrove's earthly affection. "The balmy magic of her face," did indeed, "steal comfort to their hearts, in showing that death had spared something to look like those they had fondly loved." In beholding her and her felicity, they experienced as much happiness as this world could yield them; but on a better their hearts long had rested, for joy unfading, bliss permanent and unalloyed.

Were we to write on for ages, we could still present our readers with some new anecdote, in attestation of the perfect happiness of our hero and heroine. In a few months after their union, they visited the banks of the Arno together: it was a visit that deeply wounded the sensibility of Julia, but she had her Alfred with her, who with anxious tenderness soothed and consoled her, and still, as ever, she found him her best comforter, next to Heaven.

The grateful and attached Pietro they amply rewarded, by a provision for life. Upon the spot which contained the mouldering clay of Mrs. Waldegrave, Julia had a beautiful monument erected, to illustrate the virtues of her invaluable friend, as a tribute of her never fading-gratitude; and the sacred remains of Colonel and Lady Adelaide De Clifford were removed with pious care, from their unhallowed sepulchre, to England, and laid in the tomb with the late Duchess of Avondale.

By the most marked attention, and affectionate kindness, Julia never ceased to evince how deep had been the impression Doctor Sydenham's friendship to her (when friendship was the voluntary, uninterested impulse of benevolence to adversity) had made upon her gratitude; but to whom did she cease to remember past kindness? Not to any individual. The friends of Julia De Clifford secured to themselves the zealous friendship of Lady Montalvan, who was now, as a countess, all that exalted rank should be; and soon, in the eyes of the wise and good, the elevation of her station sunk

into comparative littleness, before the superior greatness of her transcendent virtues.

Lord St. Orville firmly believed Heaven had given to him, as a wife, the most perfect being that ever was created; and Julia felt the same conviction of the supreme favour of Heaven, in allotting to her, for husband, a man whom nature had gifted with every precious excellence, without the blemish of a fault.

So heart resident was their happiness, that it diffused its cheerfulness to their countenance and manners. Each seemed the essence of life to their better half, as the natural vivacity of both now broke forth without a care to cloud it, except when retrospective sympathy stole its pensiveness over the brow of Julia, as it saddened her bosom for the misfortunes and griefs of her parents, the Duke of Avondale, and her second father. To each other, Lord St. Orville and Lady Montalvan were fascinatingly playful: to society they gave animation, and to their family circle so much

smiling gladness, that their mutual relatives felt, and declared, they knew not perfect happiness when separated from them. To these beloved and affectionate friends they dedicated a great portion of their time; yet they sometimes remained alone in retirement at Valincourt abbey (now Julia's own, given her, with all the Montalvan possessions, by her adoring grandfather), to enjoy their own, sweet, domestic harmony undisturbed; where Julia, under the guidance of her highly informed husband, pursued with avidity the attainment of every mental store which the malice of Mrs. St. Clair had precluded the possibility of her acquiring, in her more juvenile days; and, here too, they could more uninterruptedly caress and cherish their lovely cherub, the young Viscount Valincourt, whom courtesy permitted to take the second title of his mother, and whom Lord St. Orville declared was the perfect image of his Julia, while Lady Montalvan felt convinced her boy was a most striking and correct resemblance of her Alfred.

That education is a powerful auxiliary in leading to mental excellence, we are fully aware; but, that even without its aid, the mind may acquire many stores, we are perfectly convinced. Those who are deprived of the blessings of improvement from instruction too often rest contented in their ignorance believing it inevitable, and take no trouble to weed their hearts and minds of any error.

In the cottage garden we have seen many a beauteous, many a fragrant flower flourish, and have felt our admiration awakened, although there was not to be found amongst them any rare exotic to astonish. There no skilful gardener was employed, all was the work of the industrious cottager himself, who carefully weeded his little plat, and cultivated every sweet and pretty posey he could obtain, to rear. Would mental exertion but perform its part, like the industrious cottager, what sweet and useful blossoms might spring forth, even in the uninstructed mind!! and was self but vigilant, ever awake, in anxious search for improvement,

like Julia De Clifford, how many children of neglect might emerge from ignorance, and boast, like her, numerous self-acquired treasures for the heart and mind!

FINIS.

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